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THOUGHT-SYMBOLISM

AND

GRAMMATIC ILLUSIONS

BEING A TREATISE ON

THE NATURE, PURPOSE, AND MATERIAL OF SPEECH

AND A

DEMONSTRATION OF THE UNREALITY, THE USELESS COMPLEXITY, AND THE EVIL EFFECTS, OF

ORTHODOX GRAMMATIC RULES IN GENERAL

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BY

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PREFACE.

THE following treatise has been in manuscript, for at least five years, in much the same shape as it now appears, but, under the title "Physiology of Speech." If that title could be generally taken in its etymologic sense, as a discourse on the nature of speech, it would be perhaps less objectionable than the present one. As, however, "physiology" is commonly supposed at the present day, to treat only of the functions of living organisms, to adopt such a title would seem to involve the common assumption that speech is such an organism.

Knives and forks, and steam-engines, if they "grow" at all, do it exactly as languages do. The "growth" of one, as of the others, is purely adaptation of material, more or less intelligently, to human purposes; and, as the present treatise aims, indirectly at least, to establish this fact, the old title is, for obvious reasons, though a little reluctantly, abandoned.

The character of the *audible* thought-symbols we call "words" is first dealt with; and incidentally, the character of those other symbols, also called words, but which are *visible* representatives, indirectly, of thought, but directly of the audible "words;" and the influences which have imparted to our language its present shape are referred to.

All the ideas which speech has hitherto proved its ability to express are either of things unitary or of things thereto attributable. Non-attributive ideas are shown to be essentially of one class, whilst attributive ideas are shown to be, for any practically useful purpose, divisible into not more than four sub-classes. Hence it appears that speech-building needs, at most, a fivefold material, and, in fact, uses in its constructions not more than five of those functionaries called "parts of speech."

Brief allusion is then made to the origin of the grammatic notions which classicism has imported into the English language, and to the forces which have, in fact, largely declassicized it, abolishing Greek and Latin modes, in spite of "learned" adherence, in name, to Greek and Latin formulæ; which, however well or ill they were fitted to represent the realities of the dead languages, succeed

only in utterly misrepresenting those of the living one.

The rest of the treatise, under the headings "Noun," "Pronoun," "Adnoun," "Conjunction," "Verb," "Adverb," "Interjection," and "Sentence-Words," illustrates the needlessly complex and clumsy methods of thought-representation enforced upon us in our vain attempts to observe absurd and impossible grammatic rules.

The writer is induced to offer his work to the public far less in the expectation of pecuniary advantage than in the hope of contributing to such a view being adopted of the nature of speech, and of its material, as will open the door to desirable improvements.

At the end a short index is given to facilitate references such as the non-division of the work into chapters and sections may render the more needful.

150, Uttoxeter New Road, Derby,*

July 18, 1884.

* The address is given in the hope that readers, deeming the author to be at fault in his facts, or in his reasonings, will kindly indicate the where and the how. The author would also welcome intimations of partial or complete coincidence in his views, and more still, practical suggestions for advancing the recognition, as such, of the illusions which hinder possible and desirable improvements in our language.

THOUGHT-SYMBOLISM

AND

GRAMMATIC ILLUSIONS.

No experience is better calculated to test the qualities of a language, and its capacity for definite representation of thought, than that of a practical lawyer. Unthinking people persuade themselves that it is quite a simple matter to *say* what they mean; quite easy, when they will, to make their meaning intelligible to, and unmistakable by, any person of ordinary intelligence who hears and is minded to understand their words. Nothing, however, can be further from the fact, and the intelligent and experienced lawyer knows, better than most, that very nice art and keen discrimination are indispensable to him who will say neither more nor less than what he intends to say, and

especially so when the subject-matter is one which everyday experience has not rendered familiar.

The daily occupation of the present writer, for over forty years, made the precise effect of English words to be his constant study; whilst the critical bent of his mind was fostered, to a large extent, by the pursuits of his leisure. Starting in life under circumstances not the most favourable, his voluntary studies took a wide range. The fact that he owes little to systematic teaching may not be altogether a disadvantage as regards his qualifications for the present task; for, in finding his own way, he is likely to have escaped those prejudices which almost invariably take root in minds trained on any established system, and which unfit them to judge quite impartially of facts that conflict with it.

The directions given to servants or workpeople, in the daily affairs of life, are constantly couched in terms so equivocal, so inappropriate, so inadequate, that, if they were *literally* carried out, if the thing bidden were literally done as bidden, the result would often be surprising, as being a very different one from, and sometimes the very reverse of, what the user of the words expected. Hearers are commonly expected to understand what is *desired* rather

than what is *said;* to construe the surrounding circumstances rather than the mere words; and, but for this, it would often be found impossible to arrive, approximately, at the meaning of ordinary speakers in their most familiar intercourse.

The present writer was long accustomed to take these facts of his observation as the inevitable result of qualities inherent in the nature of language. The world seemed, practically, as little alive as he was to the fact that man makes his own language; that speech is but one kind of language, one mode of representing thought, and different from other modes mainly in its superior capacity for the representation of *definite* ideas.

It is admitted on all hands that gestures or musical sounds may give expression to thought, just as the articulate vocal sounds we call "words" may do; and it is evident that any material whatever, whose variations one or several of the senses can appreciate, may be made a medium of conveying ideas; evident that any material object distinguishable from other objects may be habitually associated with a particular idea, till it comes to represent that particular idea, to be what we call its "symbol."

Human ingenuity is able, in this way, to con-

struct a very serviceable language out of mere gestures, as we see in the language of deaf mutes. Musical tones might unquestionably serve the purpose of a far more *definite* representation of thought than they do; they are almost infinite in their possible varieties; and, if it were as easy for people in general to distinguish them as to distinguish speech-sounds, they might supply a medium of intercourse almost as convenient as the latter do.

Sounds are the most convenient of thought-symbols, because they are producible when required, and so always at hand. Gestures have a similar advantage, but have the disadvantage that a greater physical effort is required to produce them; and, although experience proves that they are producible in variety enough to form a complete series of *sound*-symbols, it is not clear that they could be varied sufficiently to constitute them an effectual medium of *direct* thought-representation. Grains of sand might conceivably furnish a medium of thought-symbolization, if we suppose the eye keen enough to distinguish the minute differences and resemblances which, as we may well suppose, characterize them. The great objection to any such medium is that it would not be at hand always, and would involve, not only the in-

convenience of carriage, but that of keeping the material in order, to be of any use.

We call by the name of "words" two things which are essentially different; that is, the *sounds* which represent ideas *directly*, and the *alphabetic signs of those sounds* which only represent the ideas *indirectly*. Both are material symbols; both are associated with the immaterial idea; but the one directly, the other indirectly. If we call the audible symbol "word," we cannot, with due regard to real distinctions, call the visible symbol by the same name. It is, in fact, a *pro-word*, and so we would call it; or better (as shorter), *præde*. We must endeavour to keep this distinction in mind.

Between sounds and ideas no relation is discoverable except that which a society, of few or many persons, introduces when it assigns particular sounds to particular ideas, or a particular arrangement of the former to a corresponding one of the latter. The fact that in one language a particular sound is conventionally associated with an idea different from that with which it is associated in another; that the word which, in one language, has one meaning, in another has an entirely different meaning,—is evidence enough, if the fact were otherwise doubtful, that there is none but such a conventional

relation between sounds and ideas, and that, therefore, in appropriating one to the other, convenience alone needs to be consulted.

It is evident that the most convenient of all words are those of one sound or syllable; that the next most convenient are the double sounds or syllables, and so on. No language which consulted the convenience which comes of the economic use of its material would intentionally leave unused any distinguishable and readily pronounceable single sound, but would be careful to appropriate every such sound to one of those ideas which recur the most constantly, would then appropriate all producible double sounds to the ideas next in order of frequency, and would use words of a greater number of syllables only when all those of a less number had been exhausted. The fact that no language does this, that all leave unused a mass of the best material (in the shape of single and double sounds), and use, in its stead, the worst material (in the shape of cumbrous polysyllables) to represent the commonest ideas, condemns every language as inconvenient.

It is scarcely less evident that there is no possibility of representing ideas definitely except by appropriating a different symbol to every different

idea; evident that, if the same sound stands (as is commonly the case) for several ideas, there must always be uncertainty as to which idea will be called up by the word. The context, it is true, will frequently guide to a more or less approximate choice of the right idea; but, not unfrequently, will leave the real meaning most equivocal. If the possible varieties of sound be, as we maintain they are, adequate to afford a distinct and convenient symbol for every distinct idea, no ultimately valid excuse can be found for not assigning one to each, and so securing, by the appropriate and only means, that definiteness which is the cardinal virtue of speech.*

The history of any and of every language is that of the struggle of undeveloped intelligence, of inexperienced societies, to bend sound-material to the purpose of ideal expression; a history of numberless experimental attempts directed, without method or view to general results, and aiming only to secure the momentary purpose of conveying, with approxi-

* A reader who has not already noticed the fact will be surprised, if he take up any chance page of print and observe the individual sounds represented, at the number of sounds (used with others) which (in themselves) are meaningless, and at the large number of double sounds, standing for no idea, which can be put together out of the syllables presented on the page.

mate intelligibility, the ideas of the individual speaker.

It was not to be expected that, in early times, mankind should have foreseen all, or nearly all, the ultimate advantage to arise from constructing speech on scientific principles; or that it should have been capable of applying such principles to its most complicated tool, the instrument of its higher life, ere it had been able to do so with its simplest tools, those mainly of its material necessities. It were unreasonable to suppose that the tools of material production, much as we have seen in late years of their improvement, approach the highest possible perfection; but it seems far more unreasonable to suppose, as the "learned" commonly do, that language had arrived at that stage in the classic times of Greece and Rome. It was no more to be expected of the Greeks or the Romans that they should be able to construct a perfect speech-mechanism, than that they should have been able to construct the steam-engines, the railroads, or the thousand other mechanical contrivances which the advance of scientific knowledge and a wider experience have enabled modern times to do.

Unquestionably, the Greek and Latin tongues were far more complete as instruments of ideal

expression than the dialects of the rude nations around them, or than those of the scarcely less barbarous nations of Europe in the Middle Ages. That the comparatively few who could pretend to an acquaintance with these tongues, after they had ceased to be living languages, should have despised all else, and have far over-estimated the perfections of the Greek and Latin, is not to be wondered at. It is surprising, however, that, in their idolatrous admiration of classic achievement, they should have conceived no higher ideal of possible achievement; should have conceived, apparently, that no hope remained for humanity but to tread in the footsteps of their brilliant exemplars, and to abide, at the imminent peril of lingual decadence, by the precedents which their matchless predecessors of Greece and Rome had established. In the adaptation of the material of speech, future experience was to go, with the learned, for nothing, and future ages not to criticize, but to accept the law. It is on such assumptions as these, which no mind, not dead to all reason which conflicts with its foregone conclusion, can receive, that modern grammar rests.

The Anglo-Saxon, modelled as it was largely upon the Latin, afforded some pretext for a gram-

matic doctrine of "cases," of accord of the verb with its subject, and for other classic survivals. Modern English has departed too far from the classic models to leave any pretext for their continuance, as such, in our speech; they have, as it will be our task hereafter to show, absolutely no applicability, serve only to misrepresent it, and to produce inextricable confusion in the minds of students who seek therein sound reasons for English speech-mechanism.

In his youthful days, and indeed until quite late in life, the present writer had the same respect that most others have for rules of grammar, believing them, not merely to be established by "authority," but by rightful and incontrovertible authority—to rest in the nature of the thing they profess to systematize. Not until he undertook to instruct his youngest child in the principles of English grammar did he begin to suspect the fact, which then first dawned on him, that the English language had left some of the most conspicuous of these rules behind; that, spite of the wondrous pertinacity with which the learned strove to apply some semblance of Latin rules to modern English, there was a radical inconsistency between them; that many of the distinctions which the rules

assumed to exist were utterly fictitious, and that the many purposeless and troublesome variations in modern speech-forms, which otherwise would have passed away, were maintained for no reason, if not for the sake of affording a poor pretext for the continued existence of the rules. Finally, it became evident to the writer that the continuance of such rules served only to keep the language in a state of self-inconsistency, and to prevent a simplification which would render its acquirement far easier and its practical utility much greater than at present.

With great respect for "authority," duly exercised and in its proper sphere, the present writer was not, however, disposed to yield to it the jurisdiction it laid claim to in the grammatic sphere—that, namely, of fettering and misrepresenting the language; to concede to it the right to supersede reason and substitute its own rigid irrationality—the right to prescribe for the English or any other language rules having no foundation in its existing character, and having no recommendation but the fact that they bore some resemblance to rules applicable to the dead languages of Greece and Rome.

English grammarians have not lacked intelli-

gence to see that the English people have a way of their own of modifying their speech-forms to suit their purpose, and somewhat regardless of orthodox precedent; that their language has a "genius" which has from time to time rejected classic fetters and refused to be bound by them. They saw that it was in vain to protest against accomplished facts, vain to hope that there could be any return to classic fashions once abandoned, and that all that was yet possible was to stem the tide of supposed degeneracy, by discouraging further departures and by enforcing the necessity of adherence to such classic fashions as reckless modern genius had left intact. They did not and do not see, what to this writer soon became manifest, and which it will be his task hereafter to demonstrate, that this modern English "genius" is a good genius, a spirit, assuredly of revolt, but of revolt only against absurdity—against a slavish observance of forms which, whatever their original merit, have long ceased to be appropriate to the needs or suited to the intelligence of the present age.

In their blind admiration of classic literature, it seems never to have occurred to the *par excellent* "learned" persons (who devote themselves to the study of little else than languages) to inquire into

the nature of language itself. Whilst bestowing their labour lovingly upon investigations into what they call the "growth" of languages, into the etymologies and derivation of words, they failed utterly to recognize in themselves or in others any duty, or any authority even, to regulate this "growth," to control its wild tendencies, or to bring it into such order as other "growths" are trained into.

It is not the fact, however, in any true sense of the word, that languages "grow." Language is a *tool* merely, and may take various shapes, as judgment or caprice dictates; but there is simply not the smallest analogy between the forms which vegetation and those which languages assume. The former are the result of purely spontaneous natural forces; the latter, of man's intelligence or caprice. Man may control, but he cannot originate, a growth; languages he does originate entirely, and controls with more freedom than he can control any "growth." Nature, in his speech-organs, furnishes to man's intelligence the material of speech, just as to the engineer it furnishes the material for his steam-engine; but speech-organs no more grow, or can grow, into speech than the material which nature supplies can grow into

a steam-engine. Speech and steam-engines are equally tools; both are structures, not of nature, but of intelligence. We are impelled to lay stress upon this by the fact that the notion that language (as the product of a superhuman power) must be handled more reverently than other tools, deters and has deterred thinkers from treating the subject with the freedom indispensable for adapting it, as it might and should be adapted, to its purpose.

Science, or the knowledge of general laws, is arrived at but in one way, *i.e.* by the deductions which reason makes from experience. The larger the experience, the greater the accumulation of facts which reason can embrace and generalize, the more trustworthy will be the inferences, the more universal the laws. An extensive acquaintance with facts may amuse or it may flatter the humour or vanity of its possessor. The chief value of facts, however, lies in their subserviency to science as means for arriving at laws. These laws are the soul of facts, and, but for them, facts were empty and frivolous. Science is no more an end in itself, however, than facts are. Scientific men are prone so to regard science as "learned" men are to regard mere facts. The welfare of humanity is the soul of science as of facts.

Facts are fruitful only in so far as they prepare the way of science, and science itself is barren except in so far as it tends to ennoble life.

For direct ideal representation we need as many distinguishable sounds or sound-combinations as there are distinguishable ideas or combinations of them to be represented. These we call "words," or "audible symbols." The visible symbols, not of ideas, but of sounds, called "letters," need to be comparatively few. If, however, they are effectually to represent "words" (sounds), they must be equal in number to the elementary sounds which enter into the language to be represented. Voice-physiology reckons the sounds which enter into English words at nearly forty; the English alphabet has, however, only twenty-six letters. If each of these were the symbol of a sound not symbolized by any other,* the number is manifestly inadequate to the purpose to be effected. There is no alternative but to make some of our existing sound-symbols stand for several sounds, at the cost of no little confusion and practical difficulty; but, when this is aggravated by allowing the same letter, under varying

* *C* and *k* constantly stand for the same sounds; so also *s* and *z*. This is not uncommon, if less frequent, with other letters.

circumstances, to represent three, four, or half a dozen different sounds, and to represent, under identical circumstances, now no sound at all, now this sound, and now the other,—nothing better can be expected than the imbroglio we have in English orthography.

The superlative clumsiness and inefficiency of the English spelling machinery might lead one who had given no special attention to the matter to the conclusion that there is some practical impossibility of representing sounds, with precision and certainty, by visible signs. Those who have inquired know that there is no practical difficulty at all, and that its realization is only a question of paying a very reasonable price for a comparatively great advantage; that is, of making up our minds to modify our spelling machinery by creating the necessary number of letters and by restricting each to its legitimate office of representing *one* and but one sound.

The present generation would have to learn to use the new alphabet, and also to guard against the tendency to fall into the old habits; would have, of course, to make some present sacrifice. But the reasons for making it are such that we ought to be utterly ashamed, in face of them,

to hesitate or to magnify the difficulties as we do. It is manifestly as practicable to design and learn the use of forty (or, if need were, a hundred) different alphabetic signs, as—to go on, as we do, making a miserable shift with the inadequate number we have; easy to substitute, for the complicated forms of our twenty-six, the requisite number of equally distinguishable and far simpler forms; and so to realize a true and adequate sound-representation, with its priceless advantages, at an ultimate cost far less than that involved in the realization of our present very gross misrepresentation; a misrepresentation which makes the task of learning to spell English words, and to pronounce those we see spelled, an almost impossible one—a task involving so terrible a waste of time and mental effort in the millions who have to struggle with it more or less effectually, that only the stupidity against which the gods vainly strive would desire to inflict it longer on us and on our children. We do not hesitate to affirm that orthography in general, and English in particular, is a palpable fraud, a false pretence, an outrage on common sense, and that, but for the infatuation of those of our leaders who have more affection for ancient folly than for modern good sense, it must have been reformed long ago.

We propose now to introduce, in the form of propositions as concise as we can make them, what present themselves to our mind as the

General Laws of Speech,

as the principles which lie at its foundation and in the nature of the material it employs. They will be, in substance, a recapitulation of what has been before presented argumentatively.

1. The articulate sounds, simple and compound, which the voice-organs are capable of producing are the most convenient of known means for definitely representing our ideas and for communicating them to others.

2. Such sounds are possible representatives of ideas because they can be used as *material* symbols of *non-material* thoughts, which, except by such symbols, could not pass beyond the mind which produces them.

3. Vocal sounds are a convenient medium of communicating ideas, also, because men carry with them, unconscious of burden, the power of producing and combining them in a variety corresponding with the variety of possible ideas, and of making any particular sound, by associating it

with a particular idea, or a particular series of sounds by associating them with a particular series of ideas, the representative of that idea or of that series of ideas; and because the sense of hearing furnishes a means of distinguishing these sounds and of arriving at the ideas through the associated sound-symbols.

4. There is absolutely no connection between any idea and its sound-representative other than the relation which social convention introduces when it associates the two by appropriating particular sounds to particular ideas.

5. It follows that the appropriation of sounds to ideas is a matter over which society has unlimited jurisdiction, and that it needs to consider only, and will be rightly influenced by no other consideration than its own convenience in appropriating, or in maintaining or varying, the present appropriation of sounds to ideas.

6. The legitimate office and sphere of speech is to express thought as *definitely* as possible, and with the least expenditure of material.

7. Ideas can only be expressed definitely by appropriating to each distinguishable idea a distinguishable symbol.

8. The number of *single* voice-sounds possible

being too small to allow of a single sound being assigned to every idea which needs to be represented singly, economy of material and the advantage thence resulting require, in principle, that every single sound shall not only be made the symbol of some one idea, but shall be the symbol of one of those which recur most frequently.

9. The same reasons demand, in principle, that all possible words of two syllables shall be next utilized and be appropriated to the ideas next in order of frequency, ere any triple sound be appropriated; and that words of four or more syllables, if not abolished altogether as needless, be at no time admitted as words until the inadequacy of single, double, and triple sounds is clearly manifest.

10. Sounds are the *primary* symbols, alphabetic signs but *secondary* symbols, of ideas; that is, representatives of sounds, and not of ideas, except indirectly: hence to call the audible symbol a "word" and the visible symbol by the same name is to confound two things essentially different. Clearness of conception requires that, if the first be called "word," the other should be called by a name indicating at least its non-identity.

11. Sound-symbols, *i.e.* "words," can be adequately and conveniently represented only by an

alphabet which recognizes so many letters as there are elementary sounds to be represented, and adopts as its symbols the simplest forms which can be readily distinguished by the eye and easily formed by the hand or other mechanical means.

12. Rules for varying the sounds of "words" or the forms of their visible representatives can justify their existence only in so far as they, by such variations, facilitate the expression of ideas; and any such rule which effects that object by too great an expenditure of means is bad to that extent—is bad if and in so far as it produces an equivocal sense, and most of all bad when (as is common with existing grammatic rules) it only produces a variety in sound when there is no corresponding variation in the sense.

The first eleven of these propositions it is not needful here to discuss further. The twelfth is aimed at what will mainly occupy us further in the present treatise—the rules, namely, which etymology and syntax prescribe as necessary to be observed by writers and speakers of English. What we shall have to say in regard to that language will mostly have a general application,

seeing that rules essentially similar are laid down with regard to most other European tongues.

Grammarians, following classic example, begin by dividing words into classes, each being described as a "part of speech." All words are assumed to belong to one or other of these; not that the same word, however, always belongs to the same class, but that each, when used in the construction of a phrase or of a sentence is, according to the function it performs, referable to one or to another part of speech.*

We know that ideas cannot be woven indiscriminately any more than words can; that ideas have their functions, corresponding with those, as we should presume, of the symbols. Unless ideas or words are used with reference to those functions, stand in certain orderly relations to one another, our intelligence cannot appreciate them. What that order is, what those relations are, our purpose needs that we inquire.

All our ideas are either (1) of things regarded as individuals, as self-dependent units; or (2) of things regarded as dependent on those units, *i.e.*

* By a "phrase" we now and henceforth understand a *description*; by a "sentence," an *assertion by several words*. Other word-constructions which are neither descriptions nor assertions we call "expressions."

as their attributes. Hence speech, or the representation of ideas by combinations of words, may be characterized as "attribution." It is always, if not attribution of qualities to individuals as such, either attribution of actions or states to, or of relations as subsisting between or amongst, things individual.

In grammatic language the noun represents the first of these two classes—the ideas of things distinguishable as individuals. Grammarians, by dividing the other class, *i.e.* attributives, into six, seven, or eight sub-classes, assume that ideas represent, not only individual things, but six, seven, or eight classes of attributive things, each having a functional character distinct from that of the rest. That the nounal function is one and indivisible, and that the noun ranks rightly as the first "part of speech," we grant; but that attributive words are susceptible of a six, seven, or eight-fold functional division is what we are not prepared to admit.

The characteristic of nounhood is, as we have said, a non-dependent individuality. Nouns alone have the quality of number, are always regarded as units; and whatever thing is regarded as a unit or as an aggregation of units is, *ipso facto*, a noun.

The idea of number itself is that of an attribute; it is one of the qualities we call "adnounal," of the qualities which distinguish individuals as differing one from another. It marks off, however, the smallest of appreciable differences, but, at the same time, is the most definite of all qualities, and so is fitted to be the foundation of the *pure* science. Other adnounal qualities invariably accompany all actual and nearly all ideal individualities; but this one of number is the only constant and invariable companion, and it alone is indispensable as a content of the noun.

Words, as has been said, represent ideas, and these are not alone of things actual, *i.e.* perceptible by one or more of the senses. We can conceive of individuals which, to sense, have no existence, but such a thing is not the less a noun because its individuality is ideal only, altogether inappreciable by any one of the five senses. In the word "redness," for instance, we have a noun, the name, not of any actual thing, but of a mental abstraction—an *idea*, derived from perceptions of actual objects, making on the mind the one constant impression which "red" describes. Sense knows of no individual thing corresponding to "redness;" yet "redness" is representative of an individual,

of a thing apart and mentally distinct from other things; it stands for that kind of thing which, whether actual or but ideal, is equally a noun.

Undoubtedly, attributive ideas, as the words which represent them, may be divided, and with propriety, into several classes as performing distinguishable functions. Those which represent the qualities we have called "adnounal," which mark off the differences as between individuals, will constitute the first of the attributive parts of speech. Grammarians name this class of words "adjectives;" we prefer to call them *adnouns*.

The second of the attributive parts of speech comprises the words which describe, not, as adnouns do, the differences in individuals themselves, but the differences in their states, in their doings or abstainings, past, present, and future, real or ideal, actual or hypothetical. These words we call "verbs."

A third class of attributive ideas are those of the space and time and interdependent relations of individuals and of their states and actions to or upon one another. The words representative of these (relations) may well constitute a fourth part of speech. No such class of words is definitely recognized, and with what result will be seen as we advance.

The "adverb" of grammarians represents no one class of ideas, and hence, in the sense they attach to the word, we cannot accept the adverb as a part of speech. The name might well represent a fourth class of attributive ideas; *i.e.* the qualities which affect, not individuals themselves (as adnouns do), but the actions and states which verbs predicate of individuals. The adnoun is a primary attributive, as predicating of or defining the noun itself; *our* "adverb" would be a secondary attributive, as defining the noun, not directly, but indirectly through its state or activity—would be a direct verb, but an indirect noun, attributive.

We discover no other class of attributive ideas entering into thought-arrangements than the adnounal, the verbal, the relational, and the adverbial; and hence no other parts of speech than the four which represent these and a fifth representing the individual as such, *i.e.* the noun. To one of these five every word entering into the construction of a phrase or of a sentence may, as we believe, be with ease and with certainty referred.* With the eight or nine classes of words which our grammars call "parts of speech" it is quite impos-

* There are, as we shall see, words which are not parts of speech, because they do not enter into speech-construction; and

sible to do this, and hence it comes that we see grammarians constantly at issue, and never agreed, as to which class a large number of words used in particular instances belong.

Mr. Peile, in his excellent little "Primer of Philology," * tells us that "etymologically there is no difference between adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions;" that "they are all, with a few exceptions, cases of nouns;" and that "there is no fundamental distinction between them." Whatever they may be "etymologically," we shall, as we proceed, find that, between prepositions and conjunctions and a large number of the words classed as "adverbs," there is not, nor ever was, any functional distinction; moreover, that nouns can be but in one case, and that, when they are in any other case than in that called "the nominative," they have ceased to be nouns, because they name things as attributes and not as individuals.

In the Anglo-Saxon stage of our language, nouns were inflected for "case," much as they had been in the classic languages, and as they still are, for

others that are not so because, *alone*, they perform no speech-function. The last enter into speech-construction, but only in conjunction with another or other words perform any function.

* Ch. vi. sec. 9. London: Macmillan.

instance, in the German. The inflections were said to be genitive, dative, accusative, and ablative case-forms; whilst the primal, uninflected form was called "nominative case." Moreover, like the classic, the Anglo-Saxon nouns were each and all said to be of one of three sexes—were said to be masculine or feminine often quite irrespective of their real sex or their no-sex, and neuter (neither) gender, equally irrespective of their actual sex. Again, the Anglo-Saxons were thoroughly classic in their fashion of inflecting their adnouns according as the nouns they qualified were masculine, feminine, or neuter, were singular or plural, or were in the nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, or ablative case.

Our Norman conquerors seem to have had no such reverence as the Anglo-Saxon *savans* had for classic forms. They were a little more in the habit of relying upon themselves, and upon their innate capacity of appreciating the real worth of things. They had a keen eye to the practical side of language, as of other things; saw, probably, that its purpose is, as Mr. Peile puts it, that of "mutual intelligibility," and were, as the present writer is, quite unable to comprehend how these cases, this inflection of adnouns, this indiscriminate ascription

of gender to nouns without reference to their real gender or no-gender, helped towards that or any good purpose. With their unprejudiced vision, they could not well avoid seeing that they made the language using them a tool very difficult and requiring great skill to handle; and hence, "when coalescing with the English, they had," as Mr. Peile expresses it, "no mind to trouble themselves with learning the English grammar, and, finding it the readiest way to mutual intelligibility, they broke down the English inflections." *

They did well; they needed not, and hence were too practical to attempt, to argue the matter with pedants who saw and could see only wisdom and propriety in these follies and absurdities: they simply ignored them, and in so doing, they rescued our language from its greatest reproach; conferred on their new country, whilst effecting their own immediate purpose, a blessing which has never yet been appreciated at its true worth, only because we have been accustomed to sit at the feet and do the bidding of "learned" commentators, mere devotees of classicism; and, whilst opening our mouths in wonder at Greek and Roman glories,

* "Primer of Philology," p. 25. The rest of our quotations from Mr. Peile are from this little work of his.

have habitually and resolutely shut our eyes against reason and the plain facts in regard to our language. The fact that English is, of all languages ever fashioned on Greek and Roman models, by far the simplest and most natural, we owe to our Norman friends who revolutionized it. The only circumstance to be regretted is that they did not thoroughly carry out the breaking down of all noun and adnoun and some of our verbal inflections. Classicism held and still holds the field on various inflectional points. It will be the main aim of what follows to show that this is a misfortune for our language, and that little else was needed but that Normanism should have been victorious along the whole line to have rendered our language in its forms a pattern of simplicity and efficiency, instead of being, what it is, a conglomerate of inconsistent parts, and, what every much-inflected speech must be, a more or less clumsy and inefficient tool.

Whether or not "reading and writing come by nature," it is certain that grammar does not. Schoolmasters testify that of all subjects it is the one generally most unattractive to children; that

it cannot be taught other than parrot-wise, and can easiest of anything be forgotten. Cobbett found little difficulty in demonstrating that it was not natural even to royal speeches, to the despatches of great generals, or to diplomatic documents. Mr. Hamblin Smith finds Shakespeare, the translators of our Bible, and other high literary authorities constantly out of accord with rules of grammar; and any one who will take the trouble critically to examine the productions of many of our great orators and statesmen, of our dignitaries, ecclesiastical or legal, will find them coming into not unfrequent collision with those rules. That such should be the case lies, not certainly in necessity nor in the nature of language, but in the complications needlessly introduced by those very rules, which set up and maintain fictitious distinctions where no differences exist. Such rules prescribe, as will be shown, crooked ways to mutual intelligibility, and denounce the natural tendency to take the direct path. We here deliberately purpose to take the part of good sense against grammar, and to maintain that good sense is not to be condemned for non-conformity to senseless rules, and that the rules which, like many of those we acknowledge in grammar, hinder more

than they help towards mutual intelligibility, are the things to be condemned and abolished.

Mr. Peile devotes to "the parts of speech" a short chapter from which we find it convenient here to borrow briefly their history. We owe them, it is said, to the Greeks of Alexandria. With little or no aid from grammatic rules, Greece attained to the apex of its philosophic, its literary, and its political glory. Only in the days of its decadence did its literary artists begin seriously to construct grammatic stays for its language, or even to classify its words into "parts of speech." "The rules of Greek grammar," says Mr. Peile, "were deduced by Alexandrian grammarians from the writings of the most flourishing period of Greek literature. But Sophocles and Thucydides did not write by those rules, for the good reason that no rules then existed; they made the matter out of which the rules were made. They wrote, we may say, tentatively; they felt the unbounded wealth of their language, and they threw out bold forms of expression, some of which survived in common use and some did not. Unless we see this we cannot really understand their style. Thucydides was not consciously writing bad grammar when he wrote his amazing anacolutha, of which a good specimen was

once constructed at Cambridge, as follows:—'An awkward thing to drive is pigs many by one man very.' He was letting his growing thought frame his language, confident that the reader would be guided through the puzzle by his comprehension of the sense. No doubt literature will limit variations; when ninety-nine use in writing the same constructions, the hundredth will not vary much, unless he wishes to be thought either uneducated or affected. General principles will become stereotyped, but enough will always be left to individual freedom of style, still more to the essential freedom of language as a whole, which can never be utterly bound by rule. All language is free within the limits of intelligibility." *

"To us," says Mr. Peile, "the substantive, adjective, pronoun, verb, adverb, preposition, conjunction, interjection, seem so inseparably bound up with grammar, that we cannot at first conceive a time when they were not recognized. Now, we see that they are not necessary at all; they do not occur in all languages. . . . All grammarians have not recognized them all; in fact, the earliest grammarians distinguished just so many parts as struck them, and the rest were added afterwards." †

* Ch. viii. sec. 2. † Ch. vi. sec. 11.

"At Alexandria, also," continues our author, "Aristarchus distinguished prepositions as a class distinct from *sundesmoi* (conjunctions), and probably also participles. These were the great bugbears to our grammatic forefathers. What were these creatures, with cases like nouns, yet followed in a sentence by other nouns, just like verbs; which also, like verbs, denoted a difference of time? No answer could be agreed upon; and a new part of speech arose, 'the metoche'—that which partakes of the nature of the noun and also of the nature of the verb; and of this term *participium* is not a very obvious rendering. From Alexandria in due course Dionysius Thrax took his eight parts of speech to Rome, and from that day to this has survived the mystic number eight. No grammarian could be forgiven who diminished the number, though he might alter the claimants to a place in the august assembly. And you will see that two have been changed. The 'metoche' was adjudged to belong to the verb. Then the 'arthron' was not wanted out of Greece—the Romans had no article. So two places were empty. One was filled by subdivision of the noun into the substantive and the adjective . . . and a new part was added at the end—the 'interjection'—to

which the wiser Greeks had not allowed a place. Such is the history of our eight parts of speech." *

The history is what, under the circumstances, might have been anticipated, one of floundering and blundering, of falling out of one false assumption into another as far removed from the truth. It is difficult to believe that the Alexandrine school, had it continued to exist otherwise than in a state of imbecile self-admiration, would have remained faithful to the octagonal classification of its first grammarians, or that it would not have paid more respect to its own reasoning powers than the Romans or we seem to have done to ours in accepting it without question, and in adhering to it with superstitious adulation.

It ought not to have been reserved for the present age to discover a thing so obvious as that all words are not parts of speech, and that, in the "august assembly" of possible parts of speech, there are not so many as eight places to be filled, eight real functions to be performed. English good sense has, within the last half-century, practically abolished the article as a part of speech; the pronoun is going; and, as will hereafter be shown, there are two others that have quite as little claim

* Ch. vi. sec. 14.

to rank with nouns, adnouns, and verbs as the article, the pronoun, or the "metoche."

As a matter of convenience, our subject will now be treated under headings corresponding to some extent with the recognized parts of speech. The "article," however, will be disposed of under the heading "Noun," and the "preposition" under that of "Conjunction."

The present writer has no new rules, no pet system of his own, to take the place of that in use. Painful experience suggested the idea that the enormous obstacles in the way of acquiring the free and "proper" use of our own language, and a knowledge of those of our neighbours, were of our own making; inquiry confirmed this impression, and at last established in his mind the conviction that little else was needed than to continue the process which in England has successfully removed a large portion of them; that, with this completed, the right use of our native language would become an acquisition as easy as at present it is difficult, whilst other languages, after like treatment, might be learned with a facility which would largely reduce the cost of establishing mutual intelligibility between those whose ideas are symbolized by differing sounds.

NOUN.

GRAMMARS usually define the part of speech they call "noun" by saying that it is "the name of a thing" or of "anything." Now, every word is "the name of a thing;" that is to say, is the sound whereby is called to mind a particular *thing* —real or ideal, perceived or conceived—with which that sound is associated. But every word is not even a "part of speech," *i.e.* does not exercise a function or perform a part in building up a speech-construction. Still less is the name of any and every *thing* a noun. Nouns do not name things in general (anything), but the class of things we regard as individuals, things non-attributive, as opposed to those "things" which other parts of speech attribute to individuals; and it is in virtue of its function in naming this *class* of things that the noun is a "part of speech."

The word *singing*, for instance, we should call "the name of a thing," that is, of an action

performed by some individual; but that one word may, according as it is used in a speech-construction, be any one of at least four parts of speech. In "her singing is artistic," we call it a noun; in "the bird is singing," it is an adverb; in "it is a singing bird," it is an adnoun; whilst in "it is singing a song," it is what we call a conjunction or relating word.

It will follow that we do not agree with Dr. Morell in his definition of the noun as "the name of anything;" nor with Mr. Mason in his, as "the name of anything we speak about." These embrace not nouns merely, but all words, whether parts of speech or not, and whatever part of speech they may be.

We have already said, and we shall when we come to the heading "Adverbs" see that Dr. Morell agrees with us, that all our ideas are of things individual and of things (qualities, actions, states, or relations) which we attribute to them. We have also said that the noun is the name of the individual (person or thing) which a "phrase" describes or which a sentence asserts. It is not "the name of *anything*," but of that thing to which the other word or words of a phrase or a sentence attribute—name of the non-dependent

thing upon which all other things are dependent. The noun is the universal CONTAINER—the *thing* which contains the other *things*, *i.e.* the attributes, named by the other parts of speech. The qualities which adnouns name, the actions and states which verbs name, and the relations which conjunctions name, are all CONTENTS of the noun—qualities, actions, states, and relations of nouns—and inconceivable except as such.*

We have Mr. Peile's authority for the fact that "adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions are, with a few exceptions, cases of nouns;" that "they have sprung out of the same material and been developed as use required." We are inclined to accept this idea; to think that the noun, in its inception, goes before, not only adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions, but that it is the original of all other parts of speech; is, in speech-physiology, the cell or corpuscle whence, by differentiation, all other parts of speech have arisen: that the idea of a "container" precedes the idea of the adnounal contents which distinguish individuals, and of the

* The "contents" which adverbs (indirectly, *i.e.* through the verb) introduce into the noun are adverbial qualities, such, namely, as influence actions and states. Adnounal qualities affect the noun's individuality directly or through another adnounal quality, but not through states or actions.

verbal contents which distinguish their actions and states, as well as of those contents which qualify actions and states, or those which indicate the relations of individuals, actions, and states to each other.

We are not aware of anything in speech-construction which makes it necessary or desirable to distinguish "proper," "common," "collective," "abstract," or "concrete" nouns from others or from each other.

Declension

is the name for certain changes of form which nouns undergo to adapt them to varied purposes. Why the corresponding changes in the verb-forms should be called by a different name (conjugation) we have discovered no good reason.

Nouns (including pronouns) are said to vary for number, for gender, and for case. The meaning and object of these variations we propose to consider separately; and first, the

Number of Nouns.

Noun-words representing a single individual are said to be of the singular number; those which

represent more than one are said to be plural. Not that singular and plural are the only numbers; for we know that the plural numbers are almost infinite; but it is supposed to be convenient to distinguish the nouns which represent single individuals from those which represent two or more, and this one thing can readily be done by varying the singular form consistently in one way. In English our general rule is to add to the singular noun the hissing sound which the letter *s* represents. If the singular noun, however, ends with a hissing sound, it is necessary to add a syllable, represented by *es*. So far, the contrivance is clumsy. If the final hiss is to be the sign of the plural, our notion is that no singular noun should end with the hissing sound. With any other the plural sign *s* coalesces, and so does not increase the number of the syllables.

Exceptions are said "to prove the rule," and therefore it seems necessary to have exceptions to the rule for pluralizing nouns. Thus, *ox* is pluralized by *en*, *child* by *ren*; whilst *brother*, *man*, *tooth*, *mouse*, *foot*, *goose*, are pluralized by inflections quite different in character—*brother* by a change of the root-vowel, and the suffix *ren*; the others by a change of the root-vowel alone.

Etymology gives interesting and often rather abstruse accounts of the origin of these and other exceptions; and those who have laboriously informed themselves of such matters are apt to imagine that they are as important as they are curious—important even because they are curious. If curiosity be given us only that it may be tickled, these matters, which lead to nothing beyond the gratification of curiosity, may be, so far, important; but that these exceptions, which, as all exceptions do, prove the rule to be false or incomplete, should be maintained because they are "curious," and in spite of their obstructiveness, is a proposition we protest against. To perpetuate them is to defy reason and good sense, to waste the mental energy necessary to impress them and keep them impressed on the memory, and also to waste speech-material which might be applied to a useful instead of to the curious but utterly useless purpose it is applied to.

The suffix *s*, then, might well distinguish the plural from the forms which are singular. To distinguish all the plural forms from one another would require as many variations as there are plural numbers. The Greeks, by an inflection, distinguished dual nouns from other plurals, and

might, if there had been adequate grounds, have distinguished, in the same way, trinals, quaternals, etc. The fact, however, that the dual inflection was not adopted by other nations is presumptive evidence that the distinction was not worth its cost. We are content to distinguish by the *inflectional* method only general, that is, utterly *indefinite*, plurality; and when we need to indicate a *definite* plurality, we employ the adnounal method, that is, we use, with the noun, either a definite numeral or an indefinite one: *ten men; several teeth.* The former indicates the exact, the other the approximate, amount of the plurality.

If, for instance, we speak of *horses*, the idea conveyed is of two or any larger number of animals. The inflection distinctly enough indicates that we are not speaking of one, but of some indefinite number more than one. If we desire to convey the idea of a definite or an approximate number of horses, we speak of *five, ten, several,* or *many horses*, using adnouns to indicate the amount of the plurality, and, at the same time, the inflection; *i.e.* use *two* methods, not to indicate two things, but one thing, the "number," namely, of the animals. The numeral tells us the exact or the approximate number—the thing we require, and

all we require to know; the inflection tells us less than we already know by the numeral—tells us nothing, in fact, or, if anything, then only that which is untrue, namely, that we are speaking, not of a definite or approximate number, but of an utterly indefinite number of horses. The inflection under such circumstances is, at best, mere tautology, telling us less definitely what has already been told us more definitely.

In the nouns *deer*, *sheep*, and *swine*, we have exceptions which illustrate the needlessness of pluralizing by inflection nouns already pluralized by a numeral. We say (because in these particular instances grammar, or the habitudes on which its rules are founded, allow us), *one deer*, *one sheep*, *two deer*, *three sheep*,—do what good sense teaches; but, if we speak of horses, we must observe the general rule, which good sense condemns, and say, *one horse*, *ten horses*. It is clear enough that *ten horse* would convey, as *ten sheep* does, the idea of that number of animals as completely as *ten horses* or *ten sheeps*. The sound of *ten cow*, *six child*, or *seven ox* offends our ears, but not *ten sheep*, *six deer*, *seven swine*. The cases are, however, parallel, and, if our ears reasoned, there would be no offence in one more than in the other.

The ear is here, as often elsewhere, the slave of bad habit, instead of being, as it should be, the servant of consistency and good sense.

It has already been noted that, in the classic tongues, adjectives changed their forms to agree in "number" with their nouns, and that, since the Norman speech-revolution, English adnouns have not this habit.* Absurd as this was, it is fairly matched, if not outdone, by the English fashion of pluralizing its nouns to agree with their adnouns when these last happen to be numerals. If we speak of *high style* or *low styles*, *old fashion* or *new fashions*, for instance, our adnouns are unvaried, whilst, if we speak of *two styles* or *several fashions*, we seem to pluralize the nouns for no conceivable reason except that the adnouns are plural. We are content, as it would seem, to have classicism standing on its head rather than to dispense with it. One practical result of this strange grammatic rule of ours is that, when using a singular and a plural numeral, each having reference to the same noun, we must, to be quite correct, repeat the noun first in the singular and then in the plural form. Thus: "He did it on

* There are, so far as we know, but two exceptions: the adnouns *this* and *that* become *these* and *those* before plural nouns.

one or *two* occasions" is slip-slop English, shirks observance of the rule, which in other parallel cases is held binding—that the plural noun shall follow ("agree with") the plural numeral, and the singular the singular. We can, and lawyers —less fearful of being prolix than anxious to be grammatically correct—do, avoid the difficulty by going round the corner thus, and saying, "He did it on one occasion or on two occasions." Good sense would have no difficulty in coming straight to the point; *i.e.* by ignoring the foolish rule, and saying, "He did it on one or two occasion," thus removing the pretext for idle repetitions.

When the singular form of a noun is used without an adnoun of plurality, the natural inference is that the person using it refers to *one* thing. It seems needless, for instance, to explain by an adnoun, when I use the word *cow* that I am speaking of *one* animal. Latin precedent does not require the addition of the numeral *one*, nor of the article *a* to the singular noun when the reference is but to one person or one thing. We have elaborate explanations of the distinction proper to be made in English between *one*, the number, and *a*, the article, but are bound to admit that the distinction is too nice for us to be able to appreciate

it. To us the "indefinite article" is neither more nor less than the number one in a very thin disguise, thrusting itself in constantly where, if it is not mischievous, it is at least useless. The Romans could find no use for it. We talk of *a hundred, a thousand,* or *a million men,* to which grammarians do not object; but when we speak of *a many men,* they denounce it as erroneous and vulgar. We fail to see the use of *a* in either case, and see the objection to it, in this, namely, that it suggests that *hundred,* for instance, is one, and that it is needful to add *a* (really the numeral *one*) to *hundred* to inform us that *hundred* does not imply several *hundreds.* The French find no need for it in such cases. They say *mil cent trois,* for instance; using but three words and the same number of syllables to express what we, to do not one whit more effectively, require six words and eight syllables — thus: *one thousand one hundred and three.*

To emphasize the *oneness* of a singular noun *a* or *one* is justifiable; in other cases it is needless, and worse.

If, as we say, there is no real distinction between *a* and the numeral *one* in their purport, there is no reasonable pretext for calling *a* an "article"

whilst *one* is called "adjective." Both "articles" are invariably used with nouns to define them, and, in function, differ in no conceivable respect from the adnoun. To make of the two little words, *a* and *the*, a separate "part of speech," is in principle no less absurd than to take any other two adjectives at random and call them by a name which implies that, as parts of speech, they are different from their fellow-adjectives.

Gender of Nouns.

Sex is a natural distinction of human creatures, of most other animals, and of plants. Grammar, in respect of this matter, however, soars above and beyond nature. *Male* and *female* it translates into the much finer words, "masculine" and "feminine," and *sex* into "gender." Experience knows of no gender but the male and the female; grammar, however, recognizes a third, which it calls "neuter" gender—a sex which is neither male nor female. English grammar, at least, does this; and a modern grammarian of talent seems inclined to revive and perpetuate a fourth gender.

"Sex," says Mr. Hamblin Smith,* "is a dis-

* "Rudiments of English Grammar and Composition." Rivingtons: Oxford, 1876.

tinction of animals; gender a distinction of words, in which sex or the absence of any distinction of sex is ascribed to persons and things. Nouns, in English, are said to be in respect of gender, *masculine* when they are the names of males, *feminine* when they are the names of females, *neuter* when names to which neither sex is ascribed, and *common* when the sex may be either male or female."

Why the Greeks and Romans should have taken the strange fancy to divide their nouns according to imaginary sexes, and without reference to their real sex or their non-sexuality, it were idle to inquire. Such a division is not a representation but a misrepresentation of ideas, and no reason can justify it or modern imitations of it. The classic practice of changing the forms of their adnouns to correspond with the gender of their nouns was no more of a reality or a necessity than the arbitrary assignment of an imaginary sexuality to the nouns; but, as they chose to do this absurd thing, the gender of the noun thereby became to them, so far, important. Gender has no such fictitious importance in English, since English experience has demonstrated that there is no need to vary adnouns because of any real or imaginary

difference in the sex of their nouns; demonstrated that, whether the noun to which an adnoun refers be male, female, or neither, the quality which the adnoun names remains unaffected. We English take the part of common sense in recognizing sexuality only where and as it exists, and hence our nouns can be said to be feminine only when they really represent a female, and masculine only when they really represent a male. To say that a word which represents neither is "neuter gender" is an abuse of words; and it is equally an abuse and a misrepresentation to say that a word which stands for a thing of uncertain sex is of the "common gender."

The French language rightly recognizes but two genders, masculine and feminine, but, foolishly enough, it assigns to every noun one or other of these, usually irrespective of the real sex or no-sex of the thing represented; thus creating for all who learn the language the terrible and absurd necessity of committing to memory these artificial distinctions. The Germans divide all their nouns into masculines, feminines, and neuters; and in most cases quite regardless of the actual sex or no-sex. Indeed, they go so far as to call, for instance, *a child* (*kind*) *a little man* (*männlein* or *männchen*),

a woman (*weïb*, *weibsbild*, *frauenzimmer*), "neuter gender," and *a man* (*mannsperson*), "feminine gender."

For plants, for birds, and for the lowest animals we have generally but one *name*, that of the species. If we desire to speak of one of these and to mark its sex, we can only do so by prefixing an adnoun and *describing* it, for instance, as a *male oak*, a *hen sparrow*, or a *she cat*. We may feminize lion or tiger by an inflection, but we can unequivocally describe the male animal only as a *male lion* or *male tiger*.

Again, we have words applicable to persons occupying various positions, characters, or ranks in life, or standing in certain relations to others or to one another, and these vary according as the person is a male or a female; whilst for such a person, without reference to his or her sex, we have no *name*. Our rules for indicating gender are far worse than those for indicating number; they are a fantastic conglomeration of exceptions, quite unworthy of the name of rules.

For a few of the domestic animals, as horses, oxen, sheep, and swine, we have three names—one indicating the species merely, the second a male, and the third a female of the species. Our inti-

mate association with these animals, and the frequent references it is necessary for us to make to them, now as of one, now as of the other sex, and now to them without regard to their sex, make these three names convenient in use. It would be useful to have corresponding names for all animals; though of less importance as regards those with which we are less familiarly concerned. But it is in principle bad and inconvenient that we should have, as we have in the case of horses, oxen, sheep, and swine, three names bearing no resemblance one to another. If for all animals we had three *such* names (for the species, for the male animal, and for the female), the memory would be intolerably burdened by them. But it would be no more so *in proportion*, nor more needlessly burdened, than it is by the three names for horses, oxen, sheep, deer, and swine. The fact is, we manage this matter without system; we in one case effect our purpose one way, in another case in a quite different way, and our rules are for the most part exceptions. Common sense and convenience require that we do the *same* thing consistently in the *same* way, and that, in this instance, we adopt, say, one name for the species, and inflect it always one way for a male, and always another for the

female animal. To learn these two inflections would involve no more trouble than to learn two words; yet, in these two inflections we should have a second and third name for every animal (and even for plants) at the same cost that it involves to learn that a male ox is a bull, and a female a cow; and with this extra advantage that, in the similarity of the names of the male and female to the name of the species, the relationship of the things to one another would be obvious.

If it is important that we should have sex-names and a specific name for animals in general, it is certainly not less, but much more important that we should have them for the most familiar of animals—ourselves, namely. We have *man* and *woman* for the male and female, but no name for the human species. True, we have the word *person*, by which we can refer to a human being of either sex. But the word is a most equivocal one; it has an ordinary and a grammatic sense, and is not usually considered to be applicable to children. For these and other reasons it is inappropriate as, and even does not pretend to be, a specific name for the human creature. Indeed, *man* and *woman* represent, not merely the male and female of the species, but adults. Thus, as

matters stand with us, if we desire to refer to a woman or to a female child as a human being merely, we must speak of her as *man;* and it is the same if the reference be to a person whose sex and age are unknown to us,—that is, we must call the creature whose age or sex is unknown by a name which literally implies that he or she is an adult and a male, and must call women and girls *men* when we speak of them with men or boys as human beings.

It is not for us here to prescribe in particular instances the best practical arrangements of our speech-material, but to point out where present arrangements are defective and improvable. In the case of the human creature, the Germans have either felt more strongly than we have the need for a name for it, irrespective of age or sex, or have shown superior penetration and power of adaptation; for they have, in *Mensch*, the word we lack; a most valuable one, much used, and such a one as we, if we had it, should find most convenient.

The plural forms of the personal pronoun in the third person, *they* and *them*, refer to individuals as such merely, while the singular forms, *he, she, it, him* and *her*, refer to individuals, only as they are of the masculine or the feminine gender or of the gender

which is neither. If we have spoken of a child or of an animal, custom and sheer necessity allow us to refer back to it by the neuter form, *it*, literally implying that the child or animal is neither male nor female; but, if we need to refer to an adult person, custom does not permit the use of *it:* if we know the sex, we can use the appropriate pronoun, *he* or *she;* but if, as frequently is the case, we do not know it, we can only refer to the adult, *correctly*, as "*he* or *she*," "*him* or *her*." We are compelled, when referring by a pronoun to a single (third) person, however wide the sex or no-sex of the individual may be from the purpose, to refer by a word which implies one sex or no-sex, and we cannot, as with *they* or *them*, ignore it. In speech, as in all kinds of literature, but in legislative and legal documents especially, the necessity constantly arises of referring to single individuals of unknown sex, or without reference to his or her sex. The thing, however, cannot be done with either *he, she, it, him,* or *her;* it is absolutely necessary to attribute sex or to use the ridiculous circumlocution of "*he* or *she*," "*him* or *her*," and, if the reference happen to be to an individual who may be or may not be a person, the case is still worse—the hypothetic individual can only be referred to correctly as "*he, she,*

or *it*," etc. All this might easily be remedied by inventing a singular third personal pronoun having reference to individuality alone, and no reference to gender or the want of it; and such a word would be fully as useful as either *he*, *she*, or *it*. *

* The sense of *he*, *she*, or *it* is always *the individual before named* or referred to. If the *noun* which *first names* the individual indicates its own gender, the pronoun, by again indicating it, performs a work of supererogation; and in most cases, even when the *noun* does not indicate its own gender, the gender is a matter of utter indifference. Even where it is not so, it scarcely seems to be the legitimate business of the (third personal) pronoun to do it. The function of such a pronoun is merely to *rename* something before named and not to *add* gender or aught else to the noun it "stands for." In so far as it does this it is an *ad*noun and not a *pro*noun.

The writer is inclined to think that the best, most useful, and unobjectionable of pronouns would be one which ignored not only gender but also number and person, and signified purely and simply *the individual or individuals before named or referred to*, whether one or many, collective or alternative, masculine, feminine, or neuter, first, second, or third person.

To illustrate, we will suppose the word *et* to have that meaning, and that with it we wish to convey the sense of this sentence: "If you, or I, or John, or Mary, or the carriage, or the horses are to go to the station, *you*, *I*, *he*, *she*, *it*, or *they* must be ready at six o'clock." If *et* had the signification indicated, it would do equally well what, under actual conditions, can only be done by six words. Thus, the equivalent of our sentence would be, "If you, or I, or John, or Mary, or the carriage, or the horses are to go, etc., *et* must be ready."

Pronouns of the first and second person are original namers of persons, *i.e.* nouns pure and simple, whilst those of the third person are words of reference to individuals aforenamed—re-namers, or *pro*nouns. A word like *et* would apparently serve every purpose of referential naming; and where *I*, *we*, *thou*, *you*,

Noun Cases.

"The word 'case' (Latin, *casus*) means," says Mr. Mason,* "a falling. The ancient Greek grammarians," says he, "took a fancy to represent that form of a noun in which it is used when it is the subject of a sentence by an upright line, and compared the other forms to lines *falling* or *sloping off* from this upright line at different angles; hence a collection of the various forms which a noun might assume was called *declension* or *sloping down* of the noun. What we call the nominative case was called the *upright case*."

"*Case*," continues our author, on his own account,† "may be defined to be the form in which a noun or pronoun is used in order to show the relation in which it stands to some other word in the sentence. The process of forming the different cases of a noun is called *inflection*." In a note to sec. 66 he reiterates, "*Case* is equivalent to *form*," and argues that it is therefore incorrect to say that a noun is "the nominative case;" that, not the

need to be repeated, would serve that purpose equally well, and obviate the objection to monotonous repetition of the same sound.

* "English Grammar," sec. 62. † Sec. 63.

noun itself but the *form* it assumes to indicate its relation to the verb is the *case*. "In English," says Mr. Mason,* "there are now three cases—the nominative case, the possessive case, and the objective case. In some of the pronouns these three cases are all different; in nouns, the nominative and objective cases are alike."

On the threshold we are staggered with the manifest inconsistency between the definition of the thing called "case" and the fact of the things called "cases." If, as Mr. Mason says—and how it can be put otherwise we cannot see—a case be a form produced by inflection, and the purpose of the inflection case or form be "to show the relation in which the inflected noun stands to some other word in the sentence," the impropriety of saying that nouns which are alike in form are, some in the nominative and others in the objective *case*, is startling. To us it is a manifest abuse of words, which can be productive of nothing but mental obfuscation. The doctrine of English cases is certainly not an intelligible explanation of the facts, nor a true representation of them. That the facts are susceptible of such an explanation and representation we hope to show, if not

* Sec. 64.

under the present heading, at all events when we come to treat of verbs, transitive and intransitive.

That an inflection may well serve the purpose of indicating the fact that the individual referred to by the inflected noun stands in a particular "relation to some other word in the sentence," there can be no doubt; nor can there be any doubt that a purpose of this sort was aimed at by the Latin noun inflections. Had there been but six different relations in which a noun could stand to other words, the six Latin cases, each pointing to one, might have completely effected their purpose. We may infer, however, that they did not, when we are told, as Mr. Mason tells us,* that "the function of a preposition was originally to give greater definiteness to the somewhat vague idea expressed by a case-ending."

The function of a preposition is, as in fact it always was, to indicate that the noun it precedes stands in a particular relation to some other word; its purpose, identical with that of the case-ending. Neither preposition nor case-ending can definitely indicate more than one such relation, and in either case the inevitable result of attempting to indicate more is that several are indicated vaguely and

* Note to sec. 64.

none distinctly. The relations in question are more numerous than our prepositions, and these count by the hundred. The inadequacy, therefore, of three or six inflections to do completely the thing aimed at is manifest. Inflections and prepositions may work harmoniously to the same end on condition that each inflection and each preposition confine itself to pointing out *one* relation; but when, as in the Latin, the inflection points vaguely to sundry relations, and the preposition has to be called in aid to define which one, the result is purchased too dearly. In such a case the work of the inflection is superfluous, and the purpose would have been served equally well by the preposition alone.

The English nominative stands always for the subject or dominant—for the individual to which all the other words of the sentence are directly or indirectly attributive. Its relationship to all the other words is one, and would be obvious if only its *form* were such as to distinguish it from nouns standing in other relations. Lacking such a form, the propriety of saying that the subject or dominant is in the nominative, or in any "case" at all, may well be questioned.

Our possessive may appropriately be called a

"case," because it is marked by a peculiar inflection. Moreover, it has a merit, which should belong to every case, but which no Latin case (the nominative, perhaps, excepted) ever had; namely, that it aims to mark one and but one relation, that, namely, of ownership as between the person it refers to and the thing named by the accompanying noun. It has in this respect a merit which some of our prepositions at least, numerous as they are, cannot justly claim. We sometimes aim to indicate this very relation of ownership by a preposition, instead of by the possessive inflection, and occasionally succeed. With the inflection we always succeed, and by virtue of the inflection alone; whereas, when a success comes with the preposition, the result is often due rather to the context, *i.e.* to the sense of the words, than to the influence of the preposition. Thus, if we say, "That is *John's* book," the inflected *John* tells us infallibly that John is owner of the book; whereas, if we say, as we may say, "That is the book *of John*," the preposition *of* leaves us in uncertainty as to whether John is owner or author of the book—it points, as the Latin cases did, "vaguely" to several instead of to one relation. Again, if we say, "His was a heart of

stone," or "He was a man of honour," *of* does not of itself point out the relation existing between the nouns it joins with anything approaching definiteness, but leaves us to infer that relation in each case from the context.

With regard, then, to our possessive inflection we cannot but admit its perfect efficiency, and at the same time its great utility—admit, at all events until we have a preposition of ownership and of that alone, that we can by no means afford to dispense with it.

Nouns said to be in the objective case stand, not in one, but in numberless relations to other words. Every preposition (except *of* when it points to the possessive relation) points to one at least of the objective relations, and hence the rule that "prepositions govern the objective case." In short, if we assume, as we must, that it is the business of our objective case to show *the* relation in which the objective noun-form stands to the other words of the sentence, we must assume its capacity to point out, not one relation only, but every conceivable relation which is not the subjective nor the possessive. If our objective had a recognizable inflection, it might thereby indicate the fact that it stands in some utterly indefinite one of these

hundredfold relations. For want of it, however, it cannot even do this.

To the proper understanding of any sentence it is indispensable that we arrive, in one way or another, at a knowledge of the specific relation in which each noun stands to the other words. The relation of the possessive noun is always sufficiently indicated by the inflection. No other relation, however, is so indicated with us. We know, when we see an uninflected noun attached by a preposition ("governed" by it), that it is not subjective, but objective, and stands in the relation or one of the relations which the preposition names. The difficulty which needs clearing up, and which our grammarians do not, so far as we are aware, explain, arises when there is neither preposition nor inflection to help us even to discriminate between the subjective and the objective noun, and still less to come at the particular relation when it is ascertained that the noun is objective. As a matter of fact, however, we find no practical difficulty in distinguishing the subjective and the objective nouns in such cases, nor generally in fixing the particular relation of the objective noun; the theoretically impossible is done quite readily. The *how* of it is the only mystery, and that lies in

the fact that, in English, the subject always takes up its position before the verb and the objectives theirs after it,* and that, where a preposition is not used to name the particular objective relation, that relation is made manifest by the context. Thus, in "John struck James" we know that John is subject by its front position, that James is objective by its after position, and we see that the relations are transposed if we transpose the nouns and say, "James struck John." We know, too, that the striking which *struck* predicates must fall upon some person or thing, and hence that the name of a person or thing following that verb is in the relation of person or thing on which the action falls; that is, the context tells us what there is neither preposition nor inflection to indicate. In "He gave John a book," the context, in precisely the same way, adequately instructs us as to the relation of each of the two objective nouns; we know, as a matter of fact, that books are given to persons, and not persons to books, and

* There are some real or supposed exceptions to this rule, *e.g.* in the interrogatives and in the subjunctive forms of *be* and *have*. We shall allude to these under subsequent headings, and show that, at least as regards the interrogative, there is no exception. As the verb *be* takes no objective, the rule is not applicable when it is the assertative.

hence infer that *John* stands in the relation of he *to* whom is given, as readily as if the preposition *to* preceded it, and that *book* stands in the relation of thing given, *i.e.* in the "direct" relation always understood without a preposition.*

* When we come to treat of verbs, transitive and intransitive, we trust to be able to make clear the real nature of the direct and the indirect objectives and the distinction between them.

PRONOUN.

THAT the pronoun, as a "part of speech," is not distinguishable from the noun is generally admitted, even by grammarians, though grammars still speak of it as a distinct part of speech. Its claim to rank as such rests on the assumption that it "stands for," or is "used instead of," a noun.

If the pronoun is, what its name imports, a word "used for a noun," it must, as the deputy of the noun, do the noun's office or function; and it follows, whether we regard it as a substitute or not, that, doing the nounal function, it is a noun. A noun is the name of a thing regarded as an individual, and a pronoun another name for an individual, *i.e.* simply another noun. If we speak of the same person, for instance, as a man, a writer, an orator, or an artist, we do not call one of these names a "noun" and the others "pronouns;" nor, so far as we can discover, is there any more reason why, if we speak of the same

person first as *John*, and then as *he*, we should call *he*—the second name referring to the same person—"pronoun." The difference in the two words is certainly not in their function. The fact that they denote the same individual is irrelevant, and equally so the fact that *John* connotes the person's name whilst *he* connotes the person's sex merely. Each is equally the name of an individual, and nothing more is essential to nounhood.

To illustrate what is meant when it is said that a pronoun is "a word used instead of a noun," Mr. Mason gives this sentence: "John has come in; *he* is very tired," and intimates that, but for *he* (the pronoun), the sentence must have stood, "John has come in; *John* is very tired." It is clear that *he* refers to (denotes) the same person as the first, *John*, and, as a shorter word and as varying the sound, is preferable to *John* repeated. We cannot admit, however, what Mr. Mason assumes, that the two sentences are identical in meaning—that *he* in the first implies neither more nor less than what the second *John* does in the other sentence. *He* asserts an identity between the person who has come in and the person who is tired—is equivalent to *that same person, John*. On the other hand, the second *John*, who is tired,

may either be the same John who has come in or any other John.

He also connotes the fact that *John* is a male person. In this instance it is a somewhat superfluous piece of information; but, if the sentence were, "The dog has come in; *he* is very tired," the information which *he* gives us as to the sex of the animal is substantial. We thus see that, in the last instance, *he* not only denotes the same individuality, but connotes what a repetition of *dog* would not, both identity and the male sex—stands, not merely for the noun *dog*, but for an assertion of its sex, and of its identity with the first dog. It is not only a pro-noun, but a pro-adjective, or pro-noun and pro-adjectives.

The other personal pronouns of the third person, —*she*, *it*, and *they*—differ only in that *she* connotes the female sex, *it* the no-sex, and *they* the plural number without reference to sex—each renames the thing before named, and all predicate identity.

Other words which are called "nouns," and never "pronouns," are, like *he*, *she*, *it*, and *they*, nouns of reference (renamers). If, for instance, we ask, "Where is John? what is the man about?" *man* refers to the same individual as *John*, but tells us, what *John* did not, that the

person referred to is a male and an adult; or, if we say, "There is Nero; give the dog his dinner," *dog* refers to the same individual as *Nero* did, and adds the fact that *Nero* is a dog. The only difference between these and *he, she,* etc., is that the latter, without an adnoun, predicate identity of the two things, whilst such words as *man* and *dog*, standing for an aforenamed individual, require, in order to indicate identity, a demonstrative adjective like *the, this,* or *that.* Examine these third "personal pronouns" as we will, however, the fact remains untouched that they are names for individuals, and none the less nouns because those individuals have been spoken of before and are referred to; *he* is the general name representing all male individualities; *she,* the general name of all female individuals; *it,* the general name of all neuter individualities; and *they,* the general name of plural individuals. *Man* and *dog* are but less general names of the same kind, and might, like others, such as *person, woman, child, animal,* just as well, and for the same reason, be called pronouns as *he, she, it,* or *they.*

On what plausible ground it is possible to argue that the "personal pronouns" of the first and second persons—*I, thou, we, you*—are words "used

instead of a noun," we are still more puzzled to understand. These do not refer to a person before named, and are in no sense substitutes or *other* names of any such person. *I* is the original and only name by which a speaker can directly refer to his own individuality; *thou* and *you*, the original names by which he refers to those he addresses; and *we*, the original name he applies to himself and another or others. The nouns (names of individuals) *for which* any one of these stands are simply nowhere discoverable.

Grammarians are tolerably unanimous in calling by the name "pronoun" the words we have dealt with. Beyond these, however, unanimity is not the rule. Mr. Mason's pronominal category is as extensive as most. "Pronouns," says he, "are divided into two classes, substantive pronouns and adjective pronouns." Under the head "Substantive Pronouns" he includes—

1. The Personal;
2. The Relative and Interrogative: *who;*
3. The Relative: *that;* and
4. The Indefinites: *one, aught,* and *naught.*

Under "Adjective Pronouns"—

1. The Demonstratives: *this, that, these,* and *those;*

2. The Relatives and Interrogatives: *which* and *what;*

3. The Interrogative: *whether;*

4. The Distributives and Indefinites: *each, every, either, neither, any, other, others,* and *some;*

5. The Possessives: *mine, thine, his, its, hers, ours, yours,* and *theirs;* and

6. The Reflective: *self.*

We shall certainly not undertake to show that, in speech-construction, all these are nouns. That the "personal pronouns" are such, has been shown; and that the indefinites—*one, aught,* and *naught*—are nouns, when they represent, as they mostly do, an individual (person, thing, or nothing), we admit and maintain.

"The relative and interrogative *who,*" and "the relative *that,*" we cannot allow to be either nouns or pronouns. What they are will be shown under the headings "Conjunctions" and "Sentence-Words."

The "adjective pronouns" remain. When distributing his pronouns into substantive and adjective classes, Mr. Mason casts no shadow of doubt on the propriety of such an arrangement, but later on he discovers, and as it were by accident, that "strictly speaking, no word should be called

pronoun unless it is a substantive. But it is usual to include under this head certain demonstrative adjectives which are very often used substantively." *

We have here the rather strange admission, for Mr. Mason at least, that, unless a word is a substantive (*i.e.* a noun), it should not be called pronoun. A word is a noun, not, as we have so often in effect repeated, by virtue of its form, but by virtue of its being used substantively; and we add that no word so used can be an adjective, demonstrative or other. If a word is used as an adjective, *i.e.* with and to qualify a noun, it is, then, an adnoun; but if the same word be used at another time, not to attribute to an accompanying noun, but to call up the idea of an individual, it matters not that it was, under other conditions, an adnoun; it is now, by virtue of its substantive use, a noun; and to call it otherwise is to misrepresent it.

The demonstratives, *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those* —when they go with a noun and qualify it—are adnouns; but when they stand alone they are not so. If I say, "This gave me pain," *this* is not descriptive of an individual named by a noun;

* Sec. 129.—*My*, *thy*, etc., which are always adjectives, are, by many grammarians, called pronouns.

not an adnoun, but a noun, because it is the word that stands for the individual thing (the pain-giver) —is an individual naming-word, and not, as it would be if we said, "*This* book is mine," a word subordinate to and descriptive of the noun-word it accompanies.

Mr. Mason explains his "adjective pronouns," or rather apologizes for them thus: "In speaking we do not always *express* all that we have in our thoughts, when what is expressed shows clearly enough what is to be understood as *meant* though not expressed. One result of this is that adjectives are very often used without having the nouns to which they relate expressed. Thus: 'The *good* are happy;' *i.e.* good people; '*This* is good, but that is better;' *i.e.* this thing is good but that thing is better (sec. 97). This is especially the case with the quantitative and demonstrative adjectives; thus: '*Many* (persons) are called, but *few* (persons) are chosen;' '*All* (men or persons) heard, and *some* obeyed;' 'I know *that;*' 'I heard *what* you said' (sec. 98). In such cases as these the adjective is said to be used *substantively*, that is, as though it were itself a substantive; the real explanation being that the substantive to which the adjective belongs is only not expressed" (sec. 99).

To us this "real explanation" is as unreal as it is unsatisfactory. These words, which Mr. Mason calls "adjectives," are not adjectives; for the reason that they are not used adjectively. They call up, not the idea of a quality inherent in an individual, but of an individual having the quality the word suggests. They are words used substantively, and therefore substantives; words naming individuals, and therefore nouns. A sentence without a noun is a solecism, a thing absurd on the face of it, yet Mr. Mason's explanation involves the assumption that, for example, in the sentence, "The good are happy," there is a verb and two adjectives, but no noun. We, on the contrary, say that *good* and *happy* are nouns, and not adnouns—words indicating, not mere qualities, but the individuals of whom the verb predicates, and in whom the qualities which *good* and *happy* also name subsist.*

The "adjective pronouns" called distributives and indefinites, including many which Mr. Mason omits, *e.g. many, several, all, few, various*, etc., are, like *this* and *that*, now adnouns and now nouns—

* Mr. Mason himself defines the adjective as "a word used *with* a noun." How, in face of this, he can pretend that *good* and *happy* are adjectives, where no nouns accompany them, we cannot profess to understand.

always nouns when standing alone, and only adnouns when used with nouns. And not these alone, but hundreds of other words called "adjectives," are used in substantive fashion. To call them "adjectives" under such circumstances is to abuse the word; is to describe them by a class-word which implies that they exercise a mere attributive function when, in fact, their function is strictly nounal, *i.e.* individual-naming.

The "adjective pronouns" which Mr. Mason calls "relatives and interrogatives" will be dealt with at the same time as the relative and interrogative *who*, and, like that, be shown to belong neither to the pronominal nor to the adnounal category.

The possessives—*mine*, *thine*, etc.—are never used adjectively, that is, with nouns, to qualify them. They directly name things individual, just as *he*, *she*, etc., do, and hence are always nouns. If, for example, we say, "The book is *yours*," *yours* renames the book, with the added quality of your ownership; and so of the rest. The relationship between these and such forms as John's (possessives) is obvious. The latter, however, may either be used adnounally, *i.e.* with a noun, or nounally, *i.e.* alone. If we say, "That is John's

book," *John's* qualifies *book;* whilst if we say, "That book is John's," it stands for a book, and is a noun, as in the former it is an adnoun. The one form called "possessive case" of the noun is both noun and adnoun, whilst the "possessive pronouns" (or what are called such by some grammarians) have a form, when used adnounally, different from the nounal form. We say, "That house is *mine*," but not "That is mine house." *Mine* is here transformed into *my*, *thine* into *thy*, *hers* into *her*, *ours* into *our*, *yours* into *your*, and *theirs* into *their;* whilst, inconsistently enough, *his* and *its* are (like John's) alike, whether used as nouns or as adnouns. In the Anglo-Saxon stage *mine*, *thine*, etc., were adnouns as well as nouns, and it is evident, from what we see in the case of possessive nouns like John's, that one form is adequate to represent both noun and adnoun; that, if we had no such forms as *my*, *thy*, etc., *mine* and *thine* used with a noun would serve the purpose of adnouns just as well as the varied *my*, *thy*, etc.; that the function of the one form would be recognizable as the adnounal when used *with* a noun, and as the nounal when standing alone.*

* In German, *mein*, *dein*, etc., stand, as in the Anglo-Saxon, for both noun and adnoun, *i.e.* alone and with nouns.

The possessives—*mine, thine,* etc.—differ from nouns in general somewhat as the "personal pronouns," *I, thou, he,* etc., do. Nouns in general are the names of individuals spoken of, *i.e.* third persons. *I, thou, he,* etc., are the names of the person speaking, of the person spoken to, or of the person spoken of, *i.e.* of first, second, or third personal nouns; *mine, thine,* etc., refer to first, second, and third persons, and this seems to be the reason why they are called "pronouns," but it certainly affords no ground for questioning their nounhood.

When treating of the "number of nouns," we illustrated the needlessness of pluralizing an adjective and *also* its noun, and showed that the English practice of leaving the adnoun unchanged when an inflection indicated the plurality of the noun was more reasonable than the contrary fashion of the Greeks and the Romans, the French and other modern nations. In the case of *this* and *that,* used as adnouns, we find that the English depart from their practice in other such cases. Whilst we speak of "*good* fashion" or "*good* fashions," "*bad* style" or "*bad* styles," leaving the adnoun the same whether the noun be singular or plural, we say, "*this* fashion" or "*that* style" when our noun is singular, but, when our noun becomes plural,

this is transformed into *these*, and *that* into *those*—"*these* fashions," "*those* styles." No sound reason is discoverable for this; one change is enough to indicate the pluralization of one thing, *i.e.* of the noun, and a second is as needless and fundamentally absurd as if we should say *good fashion* and *goods fashions*, *bad style* and *bads styles*. Good sense would dictate the abolition of *these* and *those* as adnouns, and require us to say, when pointing to several individuals by our "demonstrative adjectives," "*this* men," "*that* houses." What is intended is quite as clear as if we said, *these men* or *those houses;* moreover, we act consistently, and are content with doing one thing once, with one adequate process instead of with two no whit more adequate.

It is certainly not because *this* and *that* are "*demonstrative* adjectives" that they need to be pluralized when used with plural nouns. *The* is a word of precisely the same kind, and the word *yonder;* yet we say, "the houses" or "yonder men," just as we say, "the house" or "yonder man;" do, with these "demonstrative adjectives," what is consistent with our general practice and with good sense, and the contrary of what we do in the case of *this* and *that*.

Under the head of "adjective pronouns," the reflective *self* (No. 6) alone remains. Seeing that this word is never used (as a word) except as an adnoun, *e.g.* "a *self* (*i.e.* a plain) colour," we do not understand how it can be either noun or pronoun. It enters, *as a syllable*, into combination with the *possessive adjectives*, referring to persons speaking or spoken to (first and second persons); *myself*, *thyself*, etc., and into like combinations, not with possessive adjectives referring to spoken of (third) persons, as one would expect, but with objective forms of the *personal pronoun*—*him*self, *her*self, *it*self, and *them*selves. We presume that euphony is the excuse for these inconsistencies. We will not now discuss, though we are not prepared to admit, the adequacy of the excuse.

Self, we say, is misnamed when it is called a pronoun. *Myself*, *thyself*, etc., may be pronouns (*i.e.* nouns) in such a sentence as this: "*Myself* will do it;" but if we say, "I will do it *myself*, *myself* is a mere adnoun; emphasizes, or rather defines, the noun *I*, who will do it; explains that the *I* intended is not a mere will, but the bodily personality of the individual to whom *I* refers.

In the German language *self* (*selbst*) is a *word*,

and not a mere *syllable*, in such sentences as, "He will do it himself" (*Er wird es selbst thun*). The fact shows that *self* alone would be competent to effect all that the adnouns *myself, thyself,* etc., *effect,* and that, if we chose to follow the better practice of the Germans, we might, whilst reducing our eight two-syllabled words to one word of a single syllable,* rid ourselves of the inconsistent combinations with possessive adjectives and objective forms of the personal pronoun, to which allusion has been made.

* That is, use the word *self*, instead of *myself, thyself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves.*

ADNOUN.

As no possible nomenclature could furnish a separate name for each concrete individuality that we recognize, our nouns pretend, generally, but to name things-concrete in classes, giving one name to one or any number of individuals having, in essential respects, the same characteristics. Thus *horse* is the name, not of one animal, but of a numerous class of animals; *i.e.* of individuals alike in their general character. If I speak of one horse, or of ten, or many horses, the noun indicates the class, whilst the numeral (adnoun) indicates the more or less definite portion of it on which attention is to be directed. Other adnouns direct the attention to portions of the class marked and limited by such qualities as inhere in individuals; those qualities being the things which the adnoun names. With the adnoun, the noun, which itself is but the name of the class, becomes a description of it or of some defined part of it. Thus *white horse* describes

that portion of the horse class having the quality which *white* names (whiteness). The purpose of the adnoun is to mark off quantities or qualities which the noun itself does not indicate.*

Dr. Morell defines the "adjective" as "a word *added* to a noun in order to mark or distinguish it more accurately;" † Mr. Mason, as "a word *used with* a noun to denote some quality, attribute, or fact which we connect in thought with that for which the noun stands, so that the adjective and noun together form a compound description of that which we have in our thoughts." ‡ We agree that the adjective or adnoun is a word "added to" and always "used with" a noun. We have already denied the name "adnoun" to words commonly called "adjectives," when those words do not accompany nouns, and maintained that a word which, of itself, calls up the idea of an individual is then, whatever it may on other occasions be, a noun. An adnoun is an

* We might speak of *a horsy horse*, but, as the noun itself indicates the horsiness of all horses, the adjective would be purposeless.

† Page 10.

‡ Sec. 81. A verb too is "a word used with a noun to denote an attribute" (action or state), "which we connect in thought with that (thought?) for which the noun stands." We, in thought, connect the action or state with the thing asserted of (noun).

attributive word, and, without a noun to which it can attribute, is as helpless as a verb without a subject or dominant of which it can predicate. The former attributes a quality by which the noun's individuality is affected, a quality of the kind by which individuals are distinguished one from another; whereas the verb attributes characters by which, not the individuals themselves, but their actions or states, are marked.

There is in English a generally understood rule that the adnoun precedes the noun; but this rule is frequently departed from when there is more than one adnoun. We have seen that words commonly called adjectives are constantly used as nouns; and it is equally common to use noun-words as adnouns. For instance, when we speak of *a house-dog*, we use two noun-words, not to name two things, but to describe one; and we understand *dog* to name the thing described, because it comes last, and *house* to attribute adnounally—that is, an individual-characterizing quality, to the dog—for no reason except that it goes first. On the other hand, if we speak of *a dog-house*, the reversed position of the words gives rise to the reverse inferences. Many adnoun-words, as *fine, handsome, ugly*, are not commonly used otherwise

than as adnouns. The character of such words is equally well appreciated whether they stand before or after the noun. Grammarians teach that the possessive-noun-word is always a noun. It is palpable, however, if I speak of "John's dog," that I intend to speak about a dog, and that *John's* is—like *house*, in "house-dog"—mere description of the dog: I *refer* to John, not to *name him*, but to distinguish the animal. The smallest reflection will make it evident that the possessive-noun-word is always an adnoun when it accompanies an uninflected noun-word in this manner.

Noun-words are constantly attached to other noun-words by prepositions; *e.g.* "a statue *of* bronze." The expression, *of bronze*, adnounizes the statue, just as the noun-word *bronze* would in "a bronze statue;" but we cannot with propriety call the word *bronze* in either instance "noun." *Bronze* we call "an adnoun," because it is a single word; *of bronze* we can only call "an adnounal expression."

Nouns are very frequently qualified adnounally by assertions of *fact*, *i.e.* by sentences, or by single words like the past participles, which imply a fact. Thus, we may describe one as "the man who did

it," adnounizing *the man* by the assertion of the fact that he did it; or we may characterize a piece of steel by the fact that it has been hammered, hardened, or softened, if we describe it as "a piece of hammered, hardened, or softened steel."

There seems no urgent need for the writer to say much in justification of his preference for the word "adnoun" to the old name of "adjective." The part of speech in question "adds," in fact, to the noun, as the "adverb" does to the verb. "Adjective" suggests nothing with regard to the connection between it and the noun. "Adnoun" does, and is a true, if not a complete, description of the word, and moreover corresponds with the more appropriate name given to the word that defines the verb.

The new contents which the adnoun brings, by no means adds to the noun in giving it a more extended significance. The object of speech, as we have already said, is to present, by material symbolism, ideas as definitely as possible. Nouns alone, for the most part, present ideas vaguely; adnouns limit or define them. *House*, for instance, includes any and every conceivable house, whilst *wooden house* points to a more definite class of

houses—those only that are of wood. If we add other adnouns, and say, "a large wooden house," we, by *a*, limit the class to a single house, and by *large* exclude from the wooden ones all that are not large. Each adnoun defines the noun ever more and more, by limiting its application to the ever-decreasing number which are characterized by the qualities named by the adnouns. In short, the adnoun adds generally, not by extension, but by intension or definiteness.

If we speak of "a *very* large wooden house," the word *very* influences the noun, to our thinking, in a way essentially the same as the adnouns *large* and *wooden* do, that is, it limits a third time the twice-limited class of things named by the noun. As *wooden* negatives the possible assumption that we are describing a house not of wood, *large*, that we describe one not large, so *very* negatives the possible assumption that we speak of a house but moderately large; limits the wooden house of no particular degree of largeness to one which is more than ordinarily large.

It could hardly have occurred to any one in a natural way that, in a phrase like this, *very* exercises a function other than the adnounal, and still less that it exercises the adverbial function

when there is no verb to be influenced by it. However, grammarians tell us, and quite seriously, that *very* is here an adverb, just as much as when, for instance, in "He ran *very* fast," it modifies the fast-running predicated by the verb *ran* and its adverb *fast;* tell us that it is an adverb, forsooth, not because it qualifies a verb in any way, but because it qualifies an adjective. Surely this gross perversion of the term "adverb" is enough to condemn such an arrangement, without taking into consideration the more material fact that it makes the adverb to be, not the one thing which its name implies, but two entirely distinct and inconsistent things.

It is true that, used in a phrase and without a verb, such words as *very, rather, tolerably,* do not reach the noun they qualify, so *directly* as do words like *wooden* or *large,* or as adnouns in general. We describe something when we speak of *a wooden* or *a large house,* but nothing if we say *a very* or *a rather house.* Words that directly affect the noun's individuality, as *large, wooden,* and adnouns in general do, will stand alone with their nouns, but not such words as *very, rather, tolerably.* These affect directly, not the individuality which characterizes (amongst other adnounal qualities) every

noun, but those peculiar adnounal qualities entering into nouns which are susceptible of degrees. Hence, before these words can influence the noun, a quality of this kind must be introduced, as largeness by *large*. The *house* which, as an individual thing, could not be affected by *very*, *rather*, or *tolerably*, may now be reached in its largeness by such words; which we should be inclined to call, not "adverbs," but *adnouns of degree*. Indirectly these words affect the noun's individuality; for, when *very*, for instance, modifies *a large house*, it is obvious that it cannot leave the house itself unaffected. They may be well called "indirect" or "secondary" adnouns, but as their aim and purpose, like that of direct or primary adnouns, is to qualify the noun, it seems to us a matter of indifference whether they effect this purpose directly or indirectly, whether they modify the noun, for instance, as to its absolute or merely as to its comparative size, colour, position, or other quality.

We are far from satisfied with any definition of the adnoun we have met with, and are not confident that we can offer one which will not be open to objection. We, however, venture upon this as

having the recommendation of simplicity: An adnoun is *a single word used with a noun to define it.**

* A verb is a word *used with* a noun, not, however, "to define *it*," *i.e.* the individual which the noun names, but to name an action or a state which it attributes to the noun. Conjunctions, too, are *used with* nouns, but do not define them as individuals. They attribute relations to them as verbs do actions or states.

CONJUNCTION.

Mr. Mason prepares us for his definition of the conjunction by explaining that "words which unite other words or sentences are called connective or conjunctive words," but that "connective words are found among various parts of speech." He then proceeds: "Conjunctions are connective words which are neither substantives, adjectives, nor adverbs; or, in other words, conjunctions are connective words which are neither pronouns nor relative adverbs." *

How any man can, by applying—if indeed it is possible to apply—such a definition, distinguish a conjunction from any other part of speech, we are

* Sec. 285. This definition would prove all verbs to be conjunctions, for they are certainly "connective words;" *e.g.* "He *is* a dunce;" "He *gave* the dog a bone;"—and are not substantives, adjectives, adverbs, or pronouns. Mr. Mason gives *who* as an example of a connective substantive, *which* as a connective adjective, and *whither* as a connective adverb. We admit they are connectives, but take issue on all the rest.

at a loss to conjecture. It assuredly marks out no class of words having, in speech-construction, any function peculiar to itself. To our mind it aims at nothing, if not to embrace in a final category all such words as cannot, by hook or by crook, be crammed into any other. The other parts of speech embrace, as it would seem, all non-connectives, and the substantive, the pronoun, the adjective, and the adverb each a portion of the connectives. All the rest, according to Mr. Mason, fall (why, we are not informed) into the conjunctional category; which is very convenient. By a predestined arrangement, the orphaned connectives are received into the conjunctional asylum and refuge for the homeless.

Dr. Morell defines *his* conjunction as "a word which is used to connect the different parts of an extended sentence." We say *his* conjunction, because we believe that conjunction definitions in general vary pretty much as these two. Both our authors are agreed that conjunctions are connective words, but there their agreement ends. According to Dr. Morell, if the word is connective and is used to connect the different parts of an "extended sentence," its claim to conjunctionhood is established. We are not quite sure that we know

what "an extended sentence" is. We guess that a simple assertion, though a sentence, is not an extended one. We know that admitted conjunctions attach subordinate (or adnounal) sentences to a main sentence, and also sentences not adnounal or subordinate, but co-ordinate; and hence infer that "an extended sentence" must mean a multiple sentence, *i.e.* of two or more assertions, and that the sentences may be either co-ordinate or one main and the other or others subordinate. We should imagine, for instance, that in "He comes *when* I call;" "She will wait *while* you get ready;" we have what Dr. Morell would call "extended sentences;" and that the doctor would, as we should, call *when* and *while* conjunctions. Again, we should, in this double ("extended") sentence, "Whither thou goest I will go," call, as we presume Dr. Morell would, *whither* a conjunction. Yet we see that Mr. Mason calls this very word *whither* an "adverb," and decides that it is no conjunction; and, on reference to his sec. 267, we find Mr. Mason calling *when* and *while*, and many other words, "adverbs" which, according to Dr. Morell, and as we think, are conjunctions, and are never adverbs.

Dr. Morell's definition assumes, as we read it,

that a conjunction only joins *sentences;* and we know that some such notion is prevalent in schools. Mr. Mason's definition does not warrant any such assumption; but his preliminary explanation justifies our inference that he considers that, so long as a connective word is neither a relative pronoun nor a relative adverb, it matters not whether it connects sentences or words only, so far as its title to be called "conjunction" is concerned. On this point we are clearly with Mr. Mason and against Dr. Morell; for, we cannot understand an argument, which is put forward in support of Dr. Morell's assumption, and which finds an extended or double sentence in, for instance, "He *and* John went out." Doubtless this is equivalent in meaning to "He went out *and* John went out" (clearly "an extended sentence"). The extension, however, is just what we cannot find in "He and John went out." Here we have *one* assertion about two persons; there we had one assertion about one person, and a second about a second person, making just all the difference in question. If this is not enough, it may be put stronger if we ask an advocate of Dr. Morell's theory to admit that *and,* in "Two and three make five," is a conjunction, and when he has done so, call

upon him to make *two sentences* out of those words.

With definitions such as these or any extant, so far as we know, it is impossible to make out when any word is a conjunction and when not. The jumble and confusion amongst conjunctions, pronouns, and adverbs is adequately accounted for in the make-shift definitions we have of those parts of speech, and especially of the conjunction. It is common to give lists of conjunctions, but, except as to a very small number of words, no two lists agree, and the very fact that lists are given may well be interpreted into an admission that no real test exists of what is and what is not a conjunction.

The name "conjunction"—*together joining word*—points to a function, and a very real one, performed by a large class of words and "expressions;" and it is a remarkable circumstance that, with this thus staring them in the face, grammarians could manage to flounder about as they have hitherto done in search of what was so evident. If the test of conjunctionhood were, Is the purpose of the word that of connecting ideas expressed by other words? there could be no difficulty in applying it; but when it becomes necessary, as it does with Mr. Mason's definition, first to decide that point, and

next to consider whether the connective word is not a substantive, or an adjective, or an adverb, we are nonplussed.*

Mr. Peile,† after admitting that speech is an imperfect instrument of thought, observes: "This conclusion is important, because speech has sometimes been identified with thought; and it has been held that the laws of speech—the principles which govern the production and development of languages—are the same as the laws of thought—logic." "This," says he, "is a great error. It may be conceded that some of the essentials of thought, subject and predicate, as we have already seen, must find their exponents, whether separate or compounded together, in every sentence. *But, beyond this,*" says he, and the words are emphasized, "*logic should be kept out of grammar.*"

That those who prescribe laws to be observed in the use of the speech-tool can, in their rules, afford to disregard practical logic, *i.e.* the relations of effects and causes, we have yet to learn; and unless Mr. Peile means that these relations are matters with which grammar has no concern, we cannot

* This writer, with the best consideration he could give, has never yet been able to discover a connective word that was any one of these.

† Ch. viii. sec. 8.

conjecture what it is he means when, with seeming seriousness, he says that "logic should be kept out of grammar." We suspect he is satirical; for certainly no keener satire can be passed upon grammar than to compliment it upon its irreconcilability with that disciplined good sense we commonly understand by the term "logic."

Hitherto we have dealt with *words*, only as parts of speech. We notice, however, that many words, nouns for instance, are compounded of other words, and that the compound word conveys ideas involved in each of the components. At first we write the two words separately, and, whilst we do so, commonly call each *a* "part of speech." Ultimately they coalesce, and we then call the compound "*a* part of speech." Indeed, the "subject" of a sentence is very constantly, not a single word, but a noun plus one or more adnouns. We may, for instance, say, "The oldest boy in the school spoke," and maintain that *boy* is the "subject," or, with equal propriety, that the phrase, "the oldest boy in the school," is the noun or "subject" of the sentence; but whether we speak of *boy* merely, or of "the oldest boy in the school," there is but one idea, that is, of a person, and the only difference is that the last is the more definite. If we

chose to write as one word "the oldest boy in the school" (and we do essentially the same thing in a thousand instances), we should call it "a noun," just as appropriately as we now call it "a phrase."

We shall find it constantly the case, when dealing with connective words, that the connections are effected, not by one, but by several words so mutually dependent on one another that, as they stand, one without the other is void or nearly void of meaning; and that, to insist on separating them and on assigning to each separately written part the dignity of a part of speech would be to carry analysis to the verge of absurdity, to hack to pieces rather than to anatomize. Grammarians class such words as *either*, *neither*, and *than* as conjunctions; but we all know that these, in speech-construction, are helpless without their co-relatives *or*, *nor*, or *more;* and hence, common sense declares that *either . . . or*, *neither . . . nor*, and *more . . . than* are each a single (if not a simple) conjunction, *one* and not *two* parts of speech; and surely no grammarian will dispute it! Dr. Morell goes further than this, and gives as examples of the conjunction * the compounds *as if* and *so that;* and though these are separable, and each word has a distinct

* Page 25.

meaning, we see not the least impropriety in regarding these compounds, like those before mentioned, as one part of speech.*

Speech may well be characterized as the process of phrase and sentence building, and words as the materials. The "logic" recently alluded to is certainly indispensable in house-building, and equally so in sentence-building; we can no more build houses than sentences without two terms and a copula. The separated terms—bricks, stones, etc.—require to be connected by mortar, cement, or other copulary material; that is, to be brought into firmer and more intimate relation by the appropriate conjunctional means. The analogy between the two structures is more than merely fanciful. We at once realize the propriety of the metaphor when we speak of our own body as a house or tenement, and the same metaphor is equally applicable to phrases and to sentences. They are word-constructed tenements, holding, and intended to accommodate as their tenant, a complex concept such as single words will not so suitably, if at all, contain. Single words may serve to hold the ideas of infant man, but those of the more developed in-

* *In effect* each is a "part of speech;" *in form*, a "conjunctional expression."

tellect require such accommodation as single words do not afford. The need of a savage for shelter is served by a hut or a wigwam, but civilization builds castles and palaces for the few, and ever handsomer and better habitations for the many. In like manner, phrases, and ultimately sentences, are constructed to meet the growing requirements of the common intelligence.

In phrase or sentence construction the conjunction, so far as this writer is able to frame to himself any real definition or idea of the thing, performs the copulary function, just as mortar, cement, glue, dowels, ties, and clamps do in house-building; it binds, as they do, other, and generally more bulky, materials.

This bind-material is not always, however, indispensable, either in house or in speech structures. We build walls sometimes without mortar, trusting to gravity, and to the rectangular or other appropriate shape of the unbound materials to retain them *in situ*. And so it is with some "phrases"—they are a kind of dry-wall building; the common adnoun is so shaped that it will lie upon or side by side with its noun, gravitating towards it, and needing, for the particular occasion, no attachment. The copulary material, as we call the conjunction,

is not necessarily out of place, however, in mere phrase-building (description); for we may as properly describe a horse as "a black *and* white horse," as describe it merely as "a white horse." In assertions (sentences), however, the copula is indispensable, though it is not necessarily distinct from both terms. When, for instance, we say, "honey *is* sweet," we have two terms—the thing *honey* and the quality *sweetness*, bound by a copula *is*,—here is logic *on the face* of the assertion; whilst, if we say, "Victoria reigns," our two terms and their copula are less palpable. Mr. Peile amuses us by his explanation: * "The *s* in *reigns* is practically the copula which joins the ideas of *Victoria* and *reigning*, and this is no longer separate from the second term, but has become an integral part of the whole predicate *reigns*."

We quite agree with him, and with grammarians in general, that active verbs (force-words) are copula and second term in one; and, although we cannot find the copula in the final or any particular letter or part of the verb itself, we feel that the copula is there, and that the assertion made by a subject and a force-word is as *logically* perfect as that made by *is* and two visibly distinct terms.

* Ch. viii. sec. 2.

Further inquiry into the nature of verbs we reserve for the present, premising only that, in speaking of "conjunctions," we refer only to such speech-material as binds terms external to itself, and exclude verbs of all sorts.*

The relations into which bind-material brings other house-materials to each other are mostly relations of present position. At all events, the relations are not observably so numerous as those into which speech-binding-material brings other speech-materials; and this may be accounted for if we compare the relative complexity of the two structures. Things, however, are never joined except in some relation; every conjoining involves a relating, and every relating presupposes a conjoining, of which it is in some sort a result. Hence the name "conjunction" seems to us less appropriate to the thing than would be some word which, referring directly to the relating function, would presuppose the conjoining. Moreover, as a long word, "conjunction" is bad; "relating *word*," for the same reason, is objectionable and inappropriate to much of our bind-material; that, namely, which

* The present writer was, at first, so struck with the copulary character of the verb *be*, that he decided to call it conjunction rather than verb.

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consists of "expressions" (several *words*). Each of these expressions, however, is as strictly the name of a relation as a one-word conjunction is; but, whilst the components are written separately, the "expression" cannot be called "a word."

It is obvious that when, in house-building, mortar or other bind-material is used, it adds, of necessity, to the bulk of the edifice; equally obvious that one kind of bind-material will add considerably, whilst others, though always adding something, add almost inappreciably. We shall find that it is the same with our conjunctional material; that, in binding other speech-materials, every conjunction makes some addition, *i.e.* adds, to some extent, to the ideas the conjoined words express.* It is necessary to keep this in mind in order to avoid the danger, which not unfrequently else might arise, of confounding the conjunction with other parts of speech. The functional distinction between the conjunction and other parts of speech is precisely analogous to that which exists between mortar

* Hence it comes, doubtlessly, that many conjunctions (*e.g. when, while, whither*) are set down as "adverbs;" for, whilst relating one assertion to another, for instance, they inevitably qualify, affect, or *add to* one or both; for they cannot connect the assertions without qualifying in some sort the verbs by which they are made.

or cement, and brick, stone, timber and such like building material. Mortar and cement bind, and at the same time add, more or less, to bulk; so do conjunctions: bricks, stone, and timber add to bulk, but do not bind; and so it is with nouns, adnouns, verbs, and adverbs.*

It has been already noticed that the verb is a connective word. Yet, though it carries with it the binding capacity, it can hardly, like the conjunction, be characterized as bind-material. It brings substantial new matter, and imports into the sentence something more than a relation—a fact, namely, of being or doing. Thus in "He held the horse," the verb, whilst conjoining *he* and *the horse* just as *and* does in "He *and* his horse," adds the fact of a holding. And this last is its *main* purpose, the conjoining a mere incident. With the conjunction the reverse is the case. The connection of facts and assertions is its purpose, the enunciation of a new fact but incidental. The verb builds first and binds incidentally; the conjunction binds first and adds to the building incidentally.

* We have already admitted that verbs are connective as well as assertative words. Their main purpose, however (and we call that their function), is to assert. Beams and rafters are, like verbs, connective; their main purpose, however (function), is to contribute towards the formation of roofs and floors.

By an example or two of the commonest kind the nature and function of our conjunction shall now be illustrated. The words, "I will go," as conveying a complete and definite assertion, constitute a perfect sentence, and to make such an assertion no conjunction is needed; but, if we say, "I he will go," we convey no definite idea in the absence of a word to indicate in what relation *I* and *he* stand to each other. If we introduce between those words the conjunction *and*, it tells us that they stand together as a collective two, and that the going predicated is that of two persons doing the same thing together. If, instead of *and*, we use *or*, "I *or* he will go," the relation indicated is not the collective, but the alternative—a going of one, and an inferential not-going of the other.

The position of *I* and *he*, before the verb, raises the presumption that both stand to the verb in the subjective relation, and there is nothing in the conjunctions *and* or *or* to rebut the presumption. If we say, however, "I *to* he will go," the preposition forbids us to assume that *he* is any part of the verb subject. The form and arrangement of the words are unusual, and they therefore sound strange. They are susceptible, however, of but one meaning, which is that of the sentence, "I will go to him."

To in either case points out the relation in which *I* and *he* stand to each other, in principle just as *and* and *or* did; gives us to understand that *he* or *him* does not, like *I*, stand in the subjective, but in an objective relation to the going—in that indirect objective relation, namely, which classicism calls the dative (the to-moving, more properly).

Mr. Mason seems, in his definition of the conjunction, to have overlooked the fact, not only that verbs are connective words, but also that prepositions are so. Hence, if we take his definition *au pied de la lettre*, not only are verbs conjunctions, but prepositions too, as always connecting a verb with its object. Prepositions do not connect sentences, and for that reason do not come within Dr. Morell's definition. To us it appears that the proper and primary function of the preposition is that of binding and relating the ideas expressed by other words; it does not, like the verb, bring substantial new matter; but, in so far as it adds to the bulk of the speech-construction into which it enters, it only does so incidentally.

"Prepositions," says Mr. Mason,* "are words placed before substantives, by means of which we show the relation in which things and their actions

* Sec. 277.

stand to other things." The relating function is the one here assigned, and rightly so, to the preposition. Each preposition names a different *one* of the many relations of things to other things in a state of activity; the "objective" relations, namely; relations of time, position, direction, etc. (*before, after, above, below, to, from,* and so on). In the strictest sense of the word, prepositions are relators, *i.e.* neither more nor less than conjunctions. Their name would imply that their position, before the noun whose objective relation they indicate, had something to do with their function, but it is clear that no position can make a noun other than a noun, nor make, for example, *brave* and *good* other than adnouns because in one instance we speak of "a brave and good man" and in another of "a man brave and good." Adverbs, as we know, take all sorts of positions; and conjunctions are as often found at the front of the main sentence to which they attach a subordinate one, as at the end of it. Indeed, had not the name "preposition" and the emphasis usually laid upon the "position" by grammarians suggested that its position was of the essence of this part of speech, the notion would have seemed too ridiculous to deserve remarking upon.

"All prepositions," says Dr. Latham,* "govern an oblique case; when a word ceases to do this, it ceases to be a preposition. In 'I climbed up a tree,' *up* is a preposition; in 'I climbed up,' it is an adverb." We arrive at the same conclusion as Dr. Latham, though by a simpler process. *Up*, in the first instance, conjoins and relates the *climbing* and *the tree*, and hence is what he calls a preposition and we a conjunction. In "I climbed up," *up* exercises no conjunctive or relating function, hence is not a conjunction (nor preposition); it simply defines the verb predicate, makes the climbing into an up-climbing, and hence is an adverb.

Nothing can well be clearer than that the preposition is, in function, one with the conjunction; always a word whose office is to bind other words, and to relate the ideas expressed in them. Its only peculiarity, as attaching objective nouns, is at once explained when we point out the fact that, for this very reason and for none else, were they separated from their fellow-conjunctions.

"Care is necessary," says Mr. Mason, "to distinguish connective adverbs from connective words which are not adverbs."† "The following words,"

* "Handbook of the English Language," sec. 332.

† Sec. 266.

says he,* "are conjunctive or connective adverbs: *when, while, where, whither, whence, why, wherein, whereby, wherefore, whereon, whereout, whereafter, wherever,*" etc. Let us take a sentence or two, and illustrate the adverbiality of one or two of these "conjunctive or connective adverbs." Say, "He answered *when* you called." Here are two verbs, *answered* and *called,* each predicating its particular activity or doing; the one of *he* and the other of *you;* the doing of *he* and that of *you* are *connected* by *when,* and *related* by it as coincident in time. It cannot, of course, be said that *when* does not adverbially affect the answering or the calling; it influences, modifies, adverbializes, both. But how? Simply by relating them as synchronous actions; by indicating that one took place at the same time as the other; so that, whilst the connecting and relating is the *immediate* purpose, *i.e.* the function, of *when,* the adverbialization (adding to bulk) is a mere incident, an indirect result, such as we see in the case of every conjunction. If, to take another instance, we say, "He waited *while* I considered," we have *while* connecting and relating two doings, asserted by two sentences, a principal and a sub-

* Sec. 267.

ordinate, but now in the relation of concurrent time. *While* adverbializes just as *when* did; but, if such an incidental influencing of a verb-predicate proves a word to be an adverb, it will equally prove a preposition to be such. Thus, in "He went to Paris," *to* qualifies the going, at least as plainly as *when* did the answering, or *while* the waiting; makes the going, which was quite general (might be a *from*, *past*, or any other going), into a specific to-going.

An adverb we take to be a word whose *main purpose* is to define the action or state predicated by a verb. We admitted that in "He climbed up," *up* is an adverb, because its purpose is merely to define the climbing, but denied that it is an adverb in "He climbed up a tree," because its primary purpose is to connect the tree and *he's* climbing. In the latter case, however, *up* is quite as much of an adverb as either *when* or *while*, and has at least as distinct an adverbial effect.

Mr. Mason, illustrating the *care* necessary to be taken to distinguish between connective adverbs and connective words which are not adverbs, gives this sentence: "He said that, *because* he believed it," and observes, "Here, *because* does not, by itself, modify either the verb *believed* or the verb

said; but the clause, 'because he believed it,' is an adverbial clause, modifying the verb *said;*" and he desires us hence to infer that *because* is not an adverb, like *when, while,* etc., but a conjunction. To us, "when you called" modifies the verb *answered,* and "while I considered" the verb *waited,* exactly as "because he believed it" modifies the verb *said,* and, like it, are "adverbial clauses." Exercising all the *care* we can to distinguish such words as *when, while,* etc., from *because,* we confess our failure, and are driven to infer that Mr. Mason finds between his connective adverbs and his conjunctions a distinction where there is no difference; and we are bold to maintain that the two former are as purely conjunctions as the last.*

With such impossible and meaningless definitions as grammars give of adverbs, conjunctions, and prepositions, it is no wonder their authors should disagree as to which are which, or that Mr. Mason, for instance, should deem it necessary to insist that such words as "*before, since, after,*

* *Because* refers to and binds a saying and a believing; *when,* an answering and a calling; *while,* a waiting and a considering. *Because* points out that the two predicated acts are related as causer and thing caused; *when,* that they are related as occurring at the same point of time; and *while,* that they are related as going on together.

until, usually set down as conjunctions, are, in reality, prepositions." * With real definitions such discordances could not exist, and the fact of their existence is not calculated to inspire respect for authority in the minds of students who are not content with shams, but expect to find a reality in the thing called grammar.

We are cautioned also against confounding the relative pronouns with the conjunction; and, as will be seen presently, not without reason. Dr. Morell tells us † that "relative pronouns are those which, in addition to being substitutes for the names of persons or things, also join and relate one sentence to another, as, 'I have seen the house *which* you inhabit.'" Mr. Mason says, "A relative pronoun is a word which refers to some noun or pronoun which has been already used, to mark the person or thing spoken about, and which is called the antecedent of the relative." ‡ He notes,§ "'Relative' is a bad term, because it is insufficient. *He, she, it, this, that, they,* are also (literally) *relative* pronouns, because they refer to some preceding substantive or antecedent." In

* Sec. 289. † Page 14.
‡ Sec. 144. § Note to sec. 144.

the next section* he adds, however, that "the relative pronoun differs from the definite article and the demonstrative adjectives *this* and *that* by having at the same time a *grammatically* (?) *connective* force and attaching subordinate adjective clauses to some word in the principal sentence."

Dr. Morell says,† "There are, properly speaking, three relative pronouns in the English language, *who, which,* and *that.*"‡ The present writer would prefer to consider them as, what they are, three forms of *one* thing. Their meaning is really identical, and the fashion which will have *who* and *whom* (though not *whose*) applied to persons and not to lifeless things, make a profitless distinction, such as is not made, nor found needful, in other languages.

To this extent we agree with Dr. Morell, that "the relative pronoun always joins and relates one *sentence* to another;" and with Mr. Mason, that it always "attaches a *subordinate* adjective clause to some word (the antecedent) in the principal sentence." In "I have seen the house *which*

* Sec. 145. † Page 14.

‡ Mr. Mason, as we saw (p. 70, *ante*), makes *who* and *that* substantive pronouns, and *which* an adjective pronoun; why, we cannot guess.

you inhabit," *which* attaches to *house* (antecedent, and DIRECT OBJECT of the main sentence) an "adjective clause," *i.e.* a second and subordinate sentence, adnounal (*i.e.* descriptive) of the antecedent. If we borrow from Mr. Mason this sentence: "I wrote a letter to your brother, *who* replied," etc., we have *who* now attaching to *brother* (antecedent, and INDIRECT OBJECT of *wrote*) a subordinate and adnounal sentence. If, however, we say, "The man *who* says it slanders you," we find the "relative pronoun" still attaching a subordinate and adnounal sentence, but now to the SUBJECT of the main sentence.

In every instance we may observe that the relative sentence seeks to define a noun of the *main sentence* (subject, object-direct, or object-indirect). The effect of all conjunctions is exactly this of attaching things to other things, and thereby adnounizing that thing to which the attachment is made.* Prepositions attach *nouns;* other conjunctions attach *sentences* for the most part, and either co-ordinate or subordinate. Prepositions are not the only conjunctions, however, which

* If the word to which the attachment is made is a verb, the verb-predicate is adnounized. We call this adverbializing, but it is adnounization none the less—*direct* of the verb-predicate, and *indirect* of the noun-subject.

attach nouns; nor is the relative pronoun the only one which attaches sub-sentences. The latter is peculiar alone in this, that it attaches its sub-sentence, not to the main sentence, but to a *selected noun* of the main sentence called the antecedent, and hence must always immediately follow that selected noun. This peculiarity enables us to do with the relative pronoun, what can be done by no other conjunction, namely, to introduce a sub-sentence into the body of a main sentence, as we saw in "He (*who says so*) slanders you."

That we require such a conjunction as *which* arises from the constant necessity we are under to define a particular person or thing in a principal sentence in such a way as no adnoun (single word) can define it. The adnoun may define its noun by attributing to it a passive, an active, or a resultant state, *e.g.* a *strong* man, a *running* stream, or a *choked* dog. But alone, it is unable to characterize its noun by a *definite act* or by *definite time*. Thus, if we need to define a person, for instance, by something he *did, is doing*, or *will do;* or by the fact, say, that he *was little* or *will be tall;* we can do none of these by an adjective, nor by several adjectives; we must effect our purpose by a sub-sentence, *i.e.* by an assertative description, attached

to the name of the person (antecedent) by the relative.

Whilst insisting that such words as *when, while, where,* etc., were essentially (*i.e.* primarily) conjunctions, we did not deny that they generally, if not always, modify the verbs of the sentences they bind and relate. We saw, however, in this secondary adverbial effect no reason for classing them with adverbs. Like *when, while,* etc., the relatives *who, which,* and *that* have a twofold effect. Their primary and essential purpose, we maintain, is to connect and relate the antecedent and the fact asserted in the attached sub-sentence, and the circumstance that the relative "stands for," or represents, the antecedent in the sub-sentence, is a mere resulting incident, and no more warrants our calling the relative a "pronoun," than a similar resultant effect warrants us in calling *when, while,* etc., adverbs.* In "He went to Paris," we saw

* The relative *refers* or *points to*, rather than "*stands for*," the antecedent. Its object is to indicate which is the subject whereof the sub-sentence predicates, and not to rename (as *he, she,* etc., do) the "person" before named. In "I wrote a letter for your brother, sealed it and sent it," *I* is the person writing, sealing, and sending; but if I wish to indicate that not *I* but *your brother* sealed and sent the letter, I can do so by the relative *who*, before the word *sealed;* that is, by *pointing to* "your brother" in this way.

that the preposition had an adverbial effect upon *went*, and that *to Paris* may well be called "an adverbial expression," just as in the phrase, "a man of rank," *of rank* may be called an "adnounal expression." Here we have single words, attached by conjunctions, producing what we may call "compound adverbs" and "compound adnouns," just as a compound adnoun, qualifying the antecedent, is produced by the conjunction called relative pronoun and the sub-sentence it attaches. Thus, in "I have seen the house which you inhabit," *which you inhabit* adnounally describes the house, as *of rank* describes the *man*, and the only difference is that the relative attaches a sentence, whilst *of* attaches a word. The result is the same in either case.

We notice that Mr. Mason (*ante*, p. 71) calls *what* a relative and adjective pronoun. Like *who*, *which*, and *whether*, it is also an interrogative. These, as interrogatives, will be treated of under the heading "Sentence-Words." In "He repeats *what* you said," the function of *what* is the conjoining of two sentences, and the pointing out that the two asserted doings are related as having one and the same object. It *necessarily* refers to that object. Incidentally, therefore, it may be said to

stand for it, *i.e.* to be "a pronoun." Primarily and essentially, however, it is, like *who*, *which*, and *that*, a conjoining and relating word, *i.e.* a conjunction.

Mr. Mason, as we saw, admits, and very properly so, that *he*, *she*, *it*, *this*, *that*, and *they* are "relative pronouns." We may add to these, *mine*, *thine*, *his*, *hers*, *its*, *ours*, *yours*, and *theirs*. None of these, however, are conjunctions; they are nouns pure and simple. *The* is also a relative, but always an adnoun, as are *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those* when *used with* nouns.

Fashionable grammar, assuming the relatives *who*, *which*, and *that* to be nouns (pronouns), deals with them somewhat after the same fashion that it does with other nouns. It assumes that, when the antecedent is nominative, the relative is in the same "case," and objective when the antecedent is so. *Which* and *that*, however, have no distinction on that account as regards their form, whilst, instead of *who*, fashion prescribes the use of *whom* when the reference is to an objective antecedent. All this, to our mind, is utterly meaningless, has no purpose, and no result except to produce confusion and error and to suggest unrealities.*

* The fact that *which* and *that* are unvarying, whether they point to a subject or to an object, is proof presumptive that *whom*

The rule, too, that prescribes the use of *who* and *whom* when the antecedent is a person, and of *which* or *that* in all other cases, makes what in our opinion is an idle distinction. The three words serve but one purpose, and the inference from this and what we see in other languages is, that two of them are superfluous.

Whose, like *who*, is called a "relative *pronoun*." We cannot admit that this word has anything whatever in it of the pronominal character. It always accompanies a noun, and adnounally qualifies it, though it is not an adnoun. In "The man *whose* house was attacked, fled," the primary object of *whose* is to attach to the antecedent (*man*) an assertion, defining what man, and to relate the attacked house to the man who fled. Its function hence is the conjunctional. But *whose* does not "stand for" the man (individual), as *who* would do if we said, "The man *who* was attacked, fled," but it "stands for" an attribute, the man's ownership of the house, qualifying the *house*, by a reference

is a needless form; and, whilst we know of nothing to rebut this presumption, we know that men of distinction and high education cannot always avoid blunders in the use of them, such as they never make in the use of *which* or *that*. Indeed, grammarians have not always agreed, even if they do now, as to which is the proper form in some particular cases.

to its owner. *Whose* always refers to, but never "stands for," an individual; hence is never, in its secondary character, a noun, but always an adnoun. Practically the same sense would be conveyed if we said, "The man fled; *his* house was attacked;" and *his* would stand to *house* in the same relation (adnounal) as *whose* does in the other sentence. *His*, however, leaves the two assertions unbound, because it is not a conjunction. Its *primal* character is adnounal, whilst that of *whose* is conjunctional.

Dr. Morell observes,* "There are a great number of compound conjunctions, or conjunctional phrases,† used in the English language, of which the following may be taken as examples: *as well as, as soon as, in as far as, in as much as, after that.*"

Allusion has already been made to this fact, and illustrations been given, in *either . . . or, neither . . . nor,* and *more . . . than.* We have also seen that the effect of an adnoun is produced by nouns attached by prepositions, as by sub-sentences attached by relatives; and the adverbial effect in

* Page 25.

† They are not "phrases" in our sense of the term, *i.e.* descriptions, but "expressions," *i.e.* several words producing the effect which one might produce.

similar ways. These adnounal and adverbial "expressions" and sentences may, in general, be disintegrated; the words which constitute them be resolved into parts of speech. It is not so, however, with the "compound conjunctions." We could not, for instance, say that, in "as well as," *as* is a conjunction, *well* an adverb, and *as* another conjunction. The three words are, separately, nothing; together, one conjunction. The whole "expression" stands for but one idea, and the attempt to dissect it would be a mere illustration of parsing gone mad; just as unreasonable as the attempt to treat in the same way such words as *notwithstanding*, *nevertheless*, or *forasmuch*. The only difference is that fashion writes the compound conjunctions as separate words, and *notwithstanding*, etc., as one. We have, therefore, no alternative, apparently, but to accept these compounds (written together, or in parts) as "conjunctions" when they perform the relating function.

Whether Dr. Morell at all appreciates the large number and variety of these "compound conjunctions" we see reason to doubt. Some idea of it will be arrived at as we proceed. We find that the same relation, or what is practically the same, may constantly be expressed by a one-word conjunction

or by several equivalent words, *e.g.* "He did it *for* safety, or *for the purpose of*, or *in order to* safety;" or "I spoke *of*, or *as to*, or *with regard to*, or *in reference to* the matter." In such cases as these, when we admit that *for* and *of* are conjunctions, we cannot, consistently, deny that dignity to the equivalent compounds. It would be much easier to characterize the difference in the meaning of the supposed equivalents, than in their function.

The relative *which*, forms, with prepositions, many compound conjunctions—*of which, to whom, from which*, and a hundred others; and also, indeed, many one-word conjunctions, like *whereto, whereat, whereof*, etc. The greater part of, or all, Mr. Mason's "conjunctive or connective adverbs" are really compounds of *which*, with ideas of time, place, direction, etc., and translatable into three-word conjunctions. Thus, *when* is equivalent to *at which time; while*, to *during which time; whence*, to *from which place; whither*, to *to which place;* and so on.

In the phrase, "a man of honour," we have two things, *man* and *honour*, conjoined and related by the preposition *of*. If, however, we describe one as "a man reputed honest," our

grammars do not characterize the word *reputed* as a preposition; we presume because the word it attaches (*honest*) is not a noun nor objective case.* We say, however, that the function of *reputed* is precisely the same as that of the preposition *of* in "a man of honour." It names the relation between the individual *man*, and the quality which *honest* names. Again, if we speak of "a bottle *containing* wine," we see now the active participle, as we just saw the passive participle, relating two things. In the first, an individual (*man*) was related to an attribute (*honesty*), but now we have two individuals (*bottle* and *wine*) related (*i.e.* as container and contents). Used in this wise, both participles are pure conjunctions, and the only difference observable between them is that the active participle, as attaching and relating the name of an individual, corresponds more in detail with the "preposition" than the passive participle does.

The "expression" we call "the infinitive" also constantly performs the conjunctional office, and, after the precise fashion of the preposition and the active participle, "governing" (as grammars *say*

* We note, however, that in the *phrase*, "a man of honour," *honour* is not objective; and it follows that *of* is not here what it is always supposed to be (a preposition), or, if so, that prepositions do not always "govern their nouns in the objective case."

in the case of the preposition) an objective case, *e.g.* "He has a vessel *to hold* the liquor." These participles and infinitives are usually classed as parts of the verb. When we come to deal with the verb we shall question the propriety of that arrangement, here only observing that, when joining nouns or adnouns and relating them to an individual or to a verb-predicate, they have nothing in them of the verbal (assertative) character. They are very constantly components of an "expression" having the conjunctional character; *e.g. formerly reputed, recently containing, intended to contain.* If we could rightly call the participles and the infinitive "verbs," the added word might well be called "adverb," as our grammarians no doubt would call it. In these and similar instances the added word, however, modifies a conjunction; and if it is to be dignified as a separate part of speech, it should, in all consistency, be characterized as an *adconjunction*, for it stands to the conjunction precisely in the same relation as the adverb to the verb and as the adnoun to the noun. It is, however, to our thinking, a more practicable way of disposing of the matter to regard the added word as one with the conjunction, and the two together as forming one of our "compound conjunctions."

At bottom, all relations may be said to be of likeness and difference, though in their endless variety we speak of them by many names and describe them in as many ways. When we speak, for instance, of a son being *like* or *unlike* his father, or of one thing being *even as, equal to, similar to, a contrast with, different, deviating* or *varying from,* another, we, by such words and expressions, mark their relations one to another, connect and bind words and sentences in precisely the same way as when we use such words as *and, or, but, because;* and, for our part, discover no difference whatever in the function of such words and expressions and in that of those words which all agree in calling "conjunctions."

To compare qualities in different persons or things we have a conjunctional formula, into which we introduce adnounal names of qualities; thus: "The girl is *as tall as* her mother." *As tall as* here connects the mother and the girl, or rather their respective states as regards tallness, and compares the tallness of one with the tallness of the other. There is no assertion of any *actual* tallness in either the girl or the mother, as there would be if *tall* were used adnounally. Both girl and

mother may be, consistently with the assertion, the contrary of "tall;" all that is affirmed is that the girl has a tallness equal to that of the mother, that her tallness stands to that of the mother in the *relation of equality*. Dr. Morell, as we saw, recognized "expressions" of this kind as "compound conjunctions." *As well as* and *as soon as*, which he gave, are, like *as tall as*, comparatives of equality, and all three conjunctional expressions of precisely the same character.

But it will occur to everybody that, besides these of equality, we have comparisons of *more* and *less*, *most* and *least;* and that adnouns and adverbs in general undergo inflection for the *more* and *most* comparisons. "The sign of the comparative degree," says Dr. Latham, "is equivalent in meaning to the word *more*, the sign of the superlative degree is equivalent to the word *most*." The signs alluded to are the usual suffixes, *er* and *est*, by which words, commonly used as adnouns and adverbs, are made to serve the purposes of comparison. Grammarians tell us that adnouns and adverbs change their form to express degrees of comparison, but as yet they fail to tell us, what is nevertheless the fact, that thereupon they cease to be either adnouns or adverbs, just as nouns cease

to be nouns when they are inflected for the "possessive case" and are used, not to name a thing, but to define its ownership. If we say, for instance, "John is stronger than Tom," we are told that *stronger* is an adjective in the comparative degree. If we consider, however, what it adds to either John or Tom, we shall find that it adds nothing; that it predicates no strength of either, any more than *tall* did tallness in the expression, "as tall as." For anything in the sentence, both John and Tom may be weak; the strength predicated of either is but *relative* to a less or greater strength in the other. Again, if we say, "John is *the stronger of the two* boys," or "Tom is *strongest of the three* boys," it is still the same; neither *stronger* nor *strongest* predicates any actual strength, as the adnoun *strong* does in "John *is strong*." Comparatives and superlatives of this sort are incapable of predicating qualities; all they can do is to *assist* in predicating *relationships* between *things as regards their qualities*, or between *actions as regards their manner*.

We have already denied that *neither, either,* and *than* are parts of speech; and we now add that the comparatives and superlatives are neither adnouns nor adverbs, but, like *either, neither,* and *than,*

components of "conjunctional expressions"—words which, to effect any function at all, require to be conjoined with others in a union as intimate as though they were syllables of the same word. Thus in "John is stronger than Tom," we maintain that neither *stronger* nor *than* is a part of speech, but that the two are *substantially* one word and one conjunction.* If we say, "That boy is the stronger of the two," the three words, *the stronger of*, constitute the conjunction, as in "He is strongest of all" the two words *strongest of* do.

It would seem almost superfluous to add that, when comparisons are made, not by the inflections *er* and *est*, but by the words *more* and *most*, *less* and *least*, the *seeming* adnouns and adverbs are not really such, but components of "conjunctional expressions," just as are the *inflected* adnounal and adverbial forms. Thus in "Yonder house is more lofty than this;" "That ox is the lesser of the two, or the least of the lot;" the conjunctions are *more lofty than*, *the lesser of*, *the least of*.

* "John is stronger" are words *in themselves* as empty of meaning as "John is than." *Stronger* is no more an adnoun than *than* is; both are equally incapable of qualifying John's individuality. The two words, *stronger than*, constitute what we might call "a prepositional expression," that is, a compound equivalent to a preposition, connecting *John* and *Tom*, and pointing out a relation between them as regards their strength.

VERB.

"THE verb," says Mr. Mason, "is that part of speech by means of which we are able to make an assertion about something." * We regard this as a fair and correct description of the words we English call "verbs." †

"Verbs," says our author, "are divided into two classes—transitive and intransitive verbs. A transitive verb is one which denotes an action or feeling which is directed towards some object; as, *strike*, 'He strikes the ball;' *love*, 'He loves his father.' The word which stands for the object of the action described by the verb is called 'the object of the verb.' It is put in the objective case. An intransitive verb is one which denotes a state or condition, or an action or feeling, which is not directed

* Sec. 175.

† The Latin verb is not only the assertative word, but the thing also about which the assertion is made, *i.e.* noun and verb.

towards or exerted upon an object; as, *to be, to dwell, to stand, to sit, to rejoice, to run.*" *

This classification of verbs into transitives and intransitives, into (1) words denoting an *action directed towards an object,* and (2) words denoting a *state* or an *action not directed towards an object,* is a matter by no means so plain to the understanding as school-boys are apt to imagine. Every verb is said, in grammar, to have a "subject;" and if we admit that it has, we are puzzled to understand how any verb can be without an "object," that is, can have one side and no *other* side—for it amounts to this. We know that the word "subject" is often used in the sense of *matter or thing for treatment or consideration;* but when used, as it is in grammar, as the co-relative of "object," we find it impracticable, in thought, to separate the two so that one does not involve the other.

Dr. Morell explains this binal division of verbs somewhat differently. He says, "All verbs may be divided into two great classes: first, those that imply an action passing over to some object, called transitive verbs; second, those which imply some state or action in which no object is involved, called intransitive." †

* Sec. 178. † Page 16.

Mr. Peile is evidently not satisfied with this distinction of transitives and intransitives, when he says, "The truth is this, we try for the sake of clearness to draw a definite line between transitive and intransitive verbs, though no such line exists." * "What," asks he, "can be more fluctuating than the rule that transitive verbs require an accusative? You say, *amo te*, where *te* is an accusative after a transitive verb; then, when *amo* is used alone, as it easily may be, what is it? Is it no longer transitive? And if the same verb may be transitive and intransitive, what is the good of the rule?" †

If no line exists, as we, with Mr. Peile, believe, between transitives and intransitives, we are at a loss to conceive how clearness can be advanced, or any other good purpose be served, by trying to draw it, or to maintain an unreal distinction. We are not prepared to admit the propriety of using either the word "subject" or the word "object," as applied to nouns standing in certain (opposite, as we should suppose) relations to the verb; but would prefer to call that thing of which the active verb, or *force-word*, predicates activity, and of which the passive verb or *be-word* predicates a non-active state, *dominant* rather than "subject." It is agreed

* Ch. vii. sec. 4. † Ibid., sec. 3.

by grammarians that "*be*-words," *i.e. be* and its compounds (*e.g. can*, to be able; *must*, to be obliged; *seem*, to be evident), though they have subjects, can have no objects. On the face of the matter this, to us, seems a solecism. The so-called "subject" of the force-word is represented as an agent, or bringer of force; a worker, inevitably, of some result or other. If we agree to call the *result-producer* "subject," it would seem to follow that the "object" is the *result produced*. In "He strikes the ball," therefore, *ball*, not being the thing produced, not the result of *he's* striking, is not the object, any more than *father* is object of *loves*, in "He loves his father." Yet these verbs, like all force-words, predicate a result, and, in fact, name it. The result of the predicated strike-force is a striking, and of the love-force a loving. Every force-word predicates, of the agent, or subject, the doing of a thing which the present participle names: "he dwells" is equivalent to an assertion that *he* does the thing called *dwelling;* "we stand," to an assertion that *we* do the thing called *standing;* and so on to the end of the chapter. If this thing, named by the participle, be not the "object," we know of nothing to which the word can be applied as the co-relative of "subject."

The ball which *he* strikes can, in no sense, be the co-relative of *he*, the subject. *He* is not the causer of the father, as should be the case if *he* stands to *father* in the relative position of subject to object. We say that *ball* is not object at all, but simply a definer of the object, *striking*, as to its incidence, just as *father* is definer of the incidence of the *loving*.

Moreover, the difference between such transitive and intransitive verbs as denote actions (*i.e.* "force-words") is not, as Mr. Mason puts it, that the one denotes an action directed to some object, and the other an action not so directed (taking the word "object" in the sense grammarians give to it). Nor can we agree with Dr. Morell, that in the one case the action "passes over," and in the other does not pass over, to such an object. At all events, it is not always the case. If, for instance, we take the verb *walk*, and say, "She walks her horse," *walks* is called "transitive," and *horse* the object; whilst in "She walks," the verb is said to be "intransitive" and objectless,—as Mr. Mason would say, "not directed to or exerted upon an object;" or, as Dr. Morell puts it, "implies an action in which no object is involved." We maintain, however, that in "She walks," the intran-

sitive action is "directed to" and "involves" an "object," not the same, but of precisely the same kind, as the transitive action in "She walks her horse." The "object" of "She walks" is her own body, just as in "She walks her horse" it is the horse. There is no difference in the two assertions, except that in each the walk-force operates upon, or passes over to, a different "object." "She walks" means, she does walking of herself, *i.e.* makes herself walk. "She walks her horse" means that she does walking of her horse, or makes it walk. The real difference, as it seems to us, between a transitive and an intransitive verb lies, not in the fact that the action passes over in the one case more or otherwise than in the other, but in that the intransitive gives information as to the *so-called object* which the transitive does not. Thus the intransitives *runs, jumps, walks, swims, sleeps, thinks, sits, stands, sings, stamps,* etc., tell us themselves that the running, jumping, etc., pass over to the subject's self, whilst transitives, like *strikes, throws, holds, finds, feels,* etc., leave us uninformed as to whether the actions predicated pass over to the subject's self or to an extraneous thing.

Having denied that the noun-words called objectives are rightly characterized as verb-objects,

we proceed to consider what is their true character, what the actual function they perform.

A simple sentence is generally supposed to have but one "direct objective" (the noun-word, which follows the verb and is not attached by a preposition expressed or understood). It may, however, have several noun-words attached by prepositions, and these are called "indirect objectives." Thus in "The boy struck his sister on the head with a stone on Monday morning last," we have, with one direct objective (*sister*), at least three indirect ones (*head, stone,* and *Monday*). If we say no more than that "the boy struck," we predicate an action which presents itself to our mind as wanting in definiteness, as "vague," or "incomplete." The transitive verb gives rise to an expectation of something more to come which shall at least determine the person or thing on which the striking falls.

His sister satisfies this expectation, by defining the person struck. But to define the action or state predicated by a verb is the function, not of a noun, but of an adverb. *His sister,* therefore, call it what we will, is in effect an adverb, its function adverbial, and not nounal. Grammar, in dealing with words, regards them as functionaries

in phrase and sentence construction; asks what function each one performs, as it stands in the particular phrase or sentence; and not whether in other phrases or sentences it does or does not usually perform a different function.*

On the head (first indirect objective) further defines, *i.e.* adverbializes, the striking by limiting it to a particular part of the sister's body, just as *his sister* limited it to her body generally.

With a stone, again, adverbializes the striking, by reference to the instrument.

On Monday, once more, defines the striking, by limiting it to a particular day of the week.

Morning, equivalent to *in the morning*, *i.e.* to a fourth indirect objective, is purely an adverb, limiting the verb-action to the fore part of the day mentioned; and

Last, though usually an adjective, is here, like

* *Sister*, in itself, is a word merely, and becomes a "part of speech" only when it enters into a speech-construction. In "His sister said it," it is a noun, because it stands for an individual, a non-attributive thing. In "The sister spirits fled," it is an adnoun, because it attributes to the noun *spirits*. In "He struck his sister," it is an adverb, because it attributes to the verb *struck*; it also names an individual; the naming of the individual, however, is not its main purpose, but a mere incident; the purpose is to define the striking, which, like all actions, must affect a person or a thing. *Sister*, then, names the person struck simply because it is needful to define the operation of the verbal force (striking).

all the objectives, an adverb, its effect being to confine the striking to a thoroughly definite Monday morning.

What is here shown as to the functional effect of "objects," direct and indirect, will appear consistently in every instance when they are used. The direct objectives, and those indirect ones not attached by a preposition (expressed), are pure adverbs, whilst those indirect objectives which are attached by visible prepositions are but elemental parts of the "adverbial expressions" which they, with the prepositions, form.

We proceed now to what are called the

Verb Accidents.

"These are," says Dr. Latham, "person, number, tense, and voice; and these it has been agreed to class together under the name of conjugation." *

Number and Person.

No rule of English syntax is, or needs to be, more constantly impressed on the mind and

* "Handbook of the English Language," p. 19.

memory than that which declares that "a verb *must* agree with its subject, or nominative case, in number and person;" meaning, literally and unequivocally, that, whenever a subject varies from a singular to a plural or *vice versâ*, or from one of the three persons to any other, the verb "must" undergo a corresponding change.

Why this "must" be so we are left to conjecture. It is not and cannot be pretended that an action is not the same thing in every respect whether it is predicated of one person or of several —of a speaking, of a spoken-to, or of a spoken-of person; and no reason is conceivable why the same word should not predicate the same action of any and every subject. Walking or any other action is not something different in one "person" to what it is in another, nor in several "persons" to what it is in one. No reason, except that it is our traditional habit, can be given why I should predicate present walking, for instance, of myself by the word *walk*, of the person I address by the word *walkest*, and of the person I speak about by a third word, *walks*. The reasons against it are obvious. We make distinctions where there are no differences; we use three words where one should serve, wasting speech-material, and need-

lessly burdening the memory; and last, not least, we impose on ourselves the necessity of learning to use and of constantly applying a rule which affects no purpose but that of representing things otherwise than as they are—as different when they are the same.

Grammarians, as we may easily anticipate, might reply to our objections, "We did not shape the language, nor do our rules profess to represent it as it should be. We pretend to no more than to reduce to order the established speech-customs." We reply, "This rule, however, assuredly does nothing of the kind, does not truly represent English practice; for, though there are three singular and three plural persons to be predicated of, the verb has but three forms in the present tense and but two in the past. To agree with the subject in the way you say it 'must' agree, six variations of the verb-form in each tense would be needful. If I predicate walking of *I, we, you,* or *they,* I say, in the present tense, *walk—I walk, we walk, you walk, they walk.* The subject varies four times, but the verb not at all. In the past tense, one word, *walked,* predicates alike of the first and third singular and of the three plural persons; does *not,* in fact, agree, in five cases out

of six. Your rule says it 'must' agree, not sometimes, but always; and the plain fact is, that it much seldomer agrees than it fails to agree."

If, in every instance, the verb-form varied as the subject varied, the rule in question would not misrepresent the fact, as it now glaringly does; but we are far from supposing that any advantage would accrue if it were possible to conform our language to the rule. As has been already pointed out, there results no advantage, and weighty disadvantages, from the variations of the verb-form where custom introduces them, and the introduction of more variations would but aggravate the evil.

We cannot reconcile ourselves to the notion that grammarians, charging themselves, as they do, with the duty of systematizing an actual language, should accept, in silence, absurd practices which have become incorporated into it and content themselves even with representing them *truly*. That seems to us a mean view of the office and duty of one who assumes the position of an instructor. His studies of necessity familiarize him with the defects of his language and cast on him, as it seems to us, an obligation, at least to point them out and to protest. Had grammarians

done this instead of apparently taking for granted that things were in the best possible state, such an absurd practice as that of varying the verb-form for no better reason than that the subject's person or number varied, could not long have survived their persistent criticism.

The reasons already given for abolishing these verbal variations, and for adopting the rational method of predicating one thing with one word, are already more than sufficient; but they are not the only ones, nor the only important ones. Generally the subject or dominant of which a verb predicates is either singular or plural. When it is singular we can (where there is a variation) vary the verb-form to correspond with the person of the dominant; when it is plural there is no need to vary the verb-form, for whether I speak of first, second, or third persons plural, the form is the same—*walk* in the present, *walked* in the past tense. And it makes no difference that the plural dominant is a compound of several different persons. I may say, "I, thou, and he walk;" "We, you, and they walk;" or "We, you, *or* they walk;" because the reference is always to more than one person. But if I desire to predicate, say, present walking, not of two or more *collective* persons, but

of two or more single persons, in the *alternative*, a difficulty often presents itself. I may say, "He or I walk," but not "I or he walk;" may say, "Neither he nor they go," but not "Neither they nor he go;" "Either thou or he goes," but not "Either he or thou goes." But how is this? for the subject is in each case the same, and the only difference is that the elements of the compound subject are ranged in reverse order. The fact is that the verb does not, and cannot be made to, agree either way, or in any sense, with its subject in a case of this kind. If it agrees with one element it must disagree with the other; or if, compounding a trielemental subject, we say, "Neither thou, he, nor I go," it must disagree with two of the three elements.* All this comes of having several words to predicate the same thing and binding ourselves by a rule, which compels us to apply them as if the thing to be predicated were not one thing, but several distinguishable things. The multiple forms of the verb for person and number, though altogether

* By putting the verb-form which agrees with the last element of the compound subject immediately after it, *e.g.* "He or I walk," a *seeming* accord is produced. It is, however, but a poor pretence, which overcomes the difficulty, not by getting rid of it, with its cause, but by making the discord a little less conspicuous and *pretending* not to see it.

needless, would be far less objectionable if they could be used at discretion and without reference to the nominative or dominant. The fundamental vice lies in the rule that insists upon a needless and impossible accord.

If we had six verb-variations in each tense, we might, as we have already said, produce something more like a real accord of verb and subject, indeed a perfect accord as long as we do not go beyond simple subjects. But our difficulties would be only aggravated when compound subjects had to be dealt with, for no one of our six variations could accord with a subject of two different persons put either collectively or in the alternative.

To an unreasoning desire to apply classic precedent to English practice, we doubtless owe many of our incongruous grammatic rules. There is nothing, however, in the Latin grammar really analogous to our rule about the verbal accords. The Latin "verb" was not, like ours, separate from its subject or dominant. It changed six times in each tense, *ambulo, ambulas, ambulat, ambulamus, ambulatis, ambulant;* and the variation was a means of indicating a change, not in the predication (walking), but in the person and number of the dominant. There was no pretence

of accord, because there was but one word, involving in itself both subject and predicate. Here is *one* change to effect one thing, whilst in England the rule will have us make *two* changes to effect the one result; is not content that the only variation —that in the subject—shall be indicated by a change in *it*, but will have it also indicated by a variation of the word which represents the unvaried and unvarying predication.

Voice of Verbs.

"Voice is," says Mr. Mason,* "the form of a verb by means of which we show whether the subject of the sentence stands for the *doer* or for the *object* of the action spoken of by the verb. . . . The active voice is made up of those forms of a verb which denote that the subject of the sentence stands for the doer of the action described by the verb, as, 'The boy *strikes* the ball,' 'The cat *killed* the mouse;' the passive voice, of those forms which denote that the subject of the sentence stands for the object of the action described by the verb, as, 'The ball *is struck* by the boy;' 'The mouse *was killed* by the cat.'"

* Sec. 181.

How the subject of a sentence, which asserts a doing, can be aught but the doer, or how the subject of any sentence can stand for the object of the predicated action, it passes our ingenuity to conceive. As we shall presently show, the examples prove that the thing is not done, nor do-able, in that or in any other way.

"We may," continues Mr. Mason, "speak of *one* and *the same action* by means either of a verb in the active voice, or of a verb in the passive voice; but then the word that is the *object* of the active verb must be the *subject* of the passive verb, as in the above examples." *

Again we join issue, and point-blank deny that a verb in the active, and the same verb in the passive voice (or what is taken for such) can or ever does "speak of one and the same action" by any such inversion as is pretended of subject and object, or by any other means.

Consider we first the active assertions. *Strikes* asserts, of *boy* (the subject) the *act* of striking, and *killed*, of *cat* (subject), the *act* of killing. Next the passive assertions. Neither asserts any *act* at all. The first asserts that the ball *is*, the other that the mouse *was*; one that the ball *is* in a state as of a

* Sec. 182.

thing that has been "struck," the other that the mouse *was* in the state of one "killed." The active sentences assert actions of striking and killing, the passive ones, so far from asserting "the same action," assert no actions whatever; they assert *states*, in which the ball *is* and the mouse *was;* states such as result from being struck or being killed.

The only verbs we find in the passive sentences are *is* and *was;* there is no pretence for saying that either the verb *strike* or the verb *kill* is there at all; they are voiceless as anything can be that is non-extant. The active voice has not been transmuted into some other voice, nor been made to say, inversewise or otherwise, "the same thing," but to say something about the states of the ball and the mouse, instead of the doings of the boy and the cat.*

Our explanation of "voice" is, that it is nothing, and means nothing. Any other explanation may be said, as may this of Mr. Mason, only to make darkness visible.

The origin of the thing is, no doubt, classic. The

* Under the headings of "Tenses," "Participles," and "Auxiliary Verbs," the nature of the so-called auxiliaries and of participles is more fully elucidated.

anxiety of learned schoolmen to fit our language into classic stays has, in this instance, made them quite overlook the fact that there is absolutely no analogy between the Latin verb and ours; overlook the fact that, whilst ours is a "part of speech," theirs is a whole speech, a noun and a verb, a subject and an assertion, in one word. Whether the word which, in Latin, is called "verb" asserts, in what is called its "active voice," or in its "passive," it does so, always, of itself as subject. One form is an inflection of the other; but, whilst the former predicates an action, the latter predicates a state. Thus, in the one word whose English equivalent is *I strike*, the active form asserts the doing of the act which striking names; whilst in the inflected passive, whose equivalent is *I am struck*, the assertion, of *I*, is, not an action, but a state such as results from a striking. We need not discuss the question whether or not these are rightly called active and passive voices. At least there is some plausibility in it, whilst there is not even plausibility in applying the term "voice" to English, in which the state of the matter is so entirely different. However justifiable it may be to say that in Latin the verb has two voices, it is an utter misrepresentation and mere nonsense to say it of the English verb.

Moods.

It were well if the mystification of moods could be cleared away as summarily as that of voices. The matter is obscure, in each case, in some proportion to the mass of false inferences which have been heaped upon the first false assumptions. In the matter of moods this mass is very great and the confusion corresponds.

"Moods are," says Mr. Mason,* "certain *variations of form*, by means of which we can show the *mode* or *manner* in which the attribute or fact indicated by the verb is connected in thought with the thing that is spoken of." Dr. Morell thus explains mood:† "If we regard the *mode* or *manner* in which an action presents itself to our understanding, we may consider it either as an actual reality, or as a possibility, or as a command, or as a wish; or, generally, as an action wholly undefined. ‡ The expression of these different circumstances gives rise to what are called *moods*.

* Sec. 185. † Page 34.

‡ The doctor seems to forget that some verbs predicate states and not actions, and that these may be actual or possible, as actions may.

"The simple affirmative of a fact is called the *Indicative* mood; as, 'He goes.'

"If a condition or uncertainty has to be expressed, we employ what is called the *Conditional* or *Subjunctive* mood; as, 'If he go.'

"When a command is expressed, we use the *Imperative* mood; 'Go.'

"When the power to do an action is expressed, we use the *Potential* mood; 'I can go.'

"If we express the action generally, without any limitation of the idea, we use the *Infinitive* mood, 'To go.'

"In addition to these, there are the participles or *Participial moods*, ending in *ing* and *ed*, which are simply two forms of the verb, used like an adjective; as, "a *loving* parent," "a *bruised* reed."

Mr. Mason continues: "In English there are four moods: (1) the Infinitive mood; (2) the Indicative mood; (3) the Imperative mood; (4) the Subjunctive mood."

If it were quite clearly understood what a mood is, we should not expect grammarians to disagree, as we see they do, as to the number of the moods and what they are. If we are to discuss moods, and do not wish to lose our labour, we must begin

by settling clearly what the thing is that we are about to discuss.

Mr. Mason, in a note to his list of four moods, just given, remarks, "To these moods many grammarians add the Potential mood, meaning by that mood certain combinations of the *so-called auxiliary verbs—may, might, can, could, would, should, must*—with the infinitive mood.* This is objectionable (1) because such a way of forming a mood is different from what we find in the case of the other moods, which depend upon inflection ;† (2) because the said potential mood would need to be itself subdivided into indicative forms and subjunctive forms; (3) because no grammatical analogy justifies us in calling these compound expressions 'moods:' 'I can write' and 'I must go,' are no more moods of the verbs *write* and *go* than *possum scribere* is a mood of *scribo* in Latin. The potential mood seems to have been invented because grammarians did not know what to do with an infinitive mood that is not preceded by *to*."

Dr. Morell does not attempt to justify either his potential or his participial moods. The last are

* Dr. Morell evidently means by his "potential mood" combinations only of *can* and *could* with the infinitive.

† Neither infinitive nor imperative forms are inflections, and even the subjunctive but partially so.

new to us. As they will be disposed of by the explanations we shall give under the head "Participles," they will not here be further referred to. We agree with Mr. Mason that *can* and *could* assert sometimes of actual (indicative) and at other times of possible (subjunctive) actions and states; and hence that a potential mood would need to be divided into other moods (? sub-moods). We agree, too, that analogy with the Latin and other languages, if that indeed were of any real importance, does not warrant our calling compounds of auxiliaries and infinitives "moods." If *could* and *can* make a potential mood, *may, might, would, should,* and *must* can, with no regard to the meaning of words, be said to make the *same* mood; we should rather suggest that, to be consistent, *may* and *might* ought to make a permissive mood, *would* an intentional mood; *should* a general conditional mood, *ought* an obligatory mood, and *must* a necessary mood. Moreover, if, as Dr. Morell puts it, the indicative mood only refers to "affirmations" of fact, we should want in addition, a negative mood, and an interrogative mood. Absurd as all this seems, we venture to anticipate that our readers, in the end, will see that no one of these new moods is one whit more meaningless than some at least, if not all

of the four which Mr. Mason, Dr. Morell, and grammar-books in general recognize.

It would be a difficult matter to justify a potential mood in face of Mr. Mason's objections. To take Dr. Morell's illustration, "I can go," our objection to its being any mood whatever of *go*, would be, that there is no form of *the verb go* there. It is a parallel case to "The ball is struck by the boy." If, as we all *seem* to be agreed, a verb is "that part of speech by means of which we are able to make an assertion about something," and if it is a fair corollary that *go* asserts a going, we maintain that, whatever "I can go" asserts, it asserts no going. The assertion is, not of any activity at all, but of an ability. Ability, in present time, is the verb-predicate—the thing asserted—and the infinitive *go* is a *definer* of the generality of the predicated ability; limits it to that particular ability which might be called *go-ability;* and hence is an adverbial subordinate of *can*, the only really assertative word.

If "mood," then, is to be understood as *one* thing, and not as several utterly inconsistent things, there appears no alternative but to adopt, and *abide by*, Mr. Mason's theory that a mood is *a variation in the form of the verb*. It follows, of course, that,

where there is no variation of the verb, there is no mood; and, *à fortiori*, that where, as in "I can go," the verb has vanished, there can be no mood, at all events of the vanished verb.

But, having settled what a mood is, it remains to decide what the variations in the verb-form for mood aim to indicate. Mr. Mason tells us that they are intended to show "the mode or manner" in which the verb-predicate "is connected in thought" with the dominant (the thing predicated of). This conveys to us a very misty idea, which is by no means cleared up by what follows. Dr. Morell's explanation throws a little light upon the matter. He says that the different circumstances of the mode or manner in which an action presents itself to the understanding, whether as an actual reality, or as a possibility, or as a command, or as a wish, or generally as an action wholly undefined, give rise to what are called moods.

Why, in the nature of things, verbs should change their forms to show the different modes or manners of predication, or why to show some and not other modes or manners, we are at a loss to conjecture. If, for instance, we desire to assert hesitatingly or decidedly, negatively or interrogatively, or, as we may, in a hundred other ways, we

do not use modal inflections; and why we need or have them (if we have) to predicate actions or states in the actual, possible, imperative, or wholly undefined manner, and in none else, we cannot pretend to explain.

We deny, however, the reality of the assumed fact that we have verbal *inflections* to predicate actions or states as commands or wishes, or in a wholly undefined manner, and will presently proceed to the proof. There are some variations between the forms called "indicative" and those called "subjunctive," and they aim, not altogether unintelligibly, to predicate of the same actions and states under different aspects..

Mr. Mason helped us to dispose of Dr. Morell's potential mood, and seeing that the imperative and infinitive moods may be, without such help, quite as summarily and as effectively disposed of, these will be dealt with next in order, leaving the ground clear for discussing the indicative and subjunctive moods, about which more will require to be said.

Imperative Mood.

"The imperative mood," says Mr. Mason, "includes those forms of the verb by means of which

we utter a command (requests and exhortations are only weaker kinds of commands); as, '*Give* me that book;' '*Go* away.' From its nature the imperative mood can only be used in the second person."

"Of old the imperative was supposed to have two persons in the singular number and three in the plural; and the conjugation of it appeared thus—

	Singular.	*Plural.*
1*st per.*		Let us smite.
2*nd per.*	Smite.	Smite.
3*rd per.*	Let him smite.	Let them smite.

Mr. Mason gives it, and we believe most modern grammarians do the same—

Singular.	*Plural.*
Smite [thou].	Smite [you *or* ye].

It may be inferred from what has gone before that we should not reckon *let him, us,* or *them smite* variations, and still less inflections of the verb *smite;* hence not imperative nor any other mood, tense, or form of *smite.** It is manifest, too, that Mr. Mason's two forms are but one, and it is anything but manifest wherein it differs from the indicative present of the first person singular and the three persons plural. It is not, in Mr. Mason's own words,

* We see the verb *let* here, but no verb *smite. Smite* is a mere adverb.

"a variation in the form of the verb;" ergo, not a mood. We say, moreover, that the imperative *smite* asserts no smiting in any mode or manner; and hence is no part, mode, tense, or person of *smite*. It asserts, we admit; but not, after the manner of the English verb, of a dominant separate from itself, but, after the manner of the Latin verb, of a dominant involved in itself.

The words in brackets (*thou, you* or *ye*) are supposed to be the persons of whom *smite* predicates smiting. We say, however, that *smite*, imperative, predicates nothing of any *thou, you*, or *ye;* and that these are never dominant words. *Smite*, imperative, though an assertative word, is no "*part* of speech." It is in itself a perfect assertion, a *whole* speech, a one-word equivalent of a sentence. It is, as an imperative, always a word addressed by a speaking (first) person to an auditor (second person), and always asserts the desire of the speaker that the person addressed shall *do* or *be* something, that something being indicated by the imperative itself. Thus, if I say to my neighbour, "Smite him," I assert my desire that my neighbour shall do the particular act which *smite* names; predicate my own desire, and at the same time an apparent expectation that he will do what I desire. It is not of my neigh-

bour (*thou*) that I predicate, but of myself; and always my desire mingled with an apparent expectation of its being realized. "Smite him" amounts to an assertion that I (the speaker) desire and expect you (my hearer) to do the act called smiting of the person I refer to as *him*. If, introducing the word *thou*, I said, "Smite thou him," it would be a clumsy way of saying, "I desire smiting of him *by thee*." By thus rendering the synthetic sentence into an analytic one, we see that the *thou*, *you*, or *ye*, supposed to be the subject or dominant of *smite*, is really an adverb defining the smiting desired, as to the person who is expected to do it. *Thou*, *you*, or *ye* are, in point of fact, never used, and answer no purpose. They are purely tautological, telling us only what is obvious, that the person or persons addressed is or are the person or persons we desire and expect to do the act in question.

Few persons would agree with Mr. Mason that requests and exhortations are but weaker kinds of commands. In speech, however, the same form serves, and the different sense is conveyed only by the different manner of enunciation (tone, etc.). Like pure imperatives, requestatives and exhortatives are *sentence-words*. They are addressed to an auditor, and predicate the wish of the speaker, as

imperatives do, but without assuming its probable realization. They are none of them "verbs" in the modern sense of the word, and the assumption that they constitute a "mood" is founded on a thorough misconception as to what they predicate, and of what dominant, and upon a palpable ignoring of the fact that a mood must be a varied form of the verb.

Infinitive Mood.

If we assume the form called "infinitive mood" to be a verb, we should still be at a loss to understand how it can be a "mood," *i.e.* "a variation in the form of the verb," when, as a matter of fact, it is identical with at least four of the indicative forms, viz. with the first person singular and the three plural persons of the present tense. But we can no more admit that it is a verb than that it is a mood, seeing that, to quote Mr. Mason's words, "it is impossible to make an assertion by means of it."* We take it that the function of the verb is, and is so admitted to be by all grammarians, the assertative, and therefore entirely fail to com-

* Sec. 188.

prehend how grammarians persuade themselves that a word with which that function cannot be performed can be a verb, and, *à fortiori*, a mood.

"The infinitive mood," says Mr. Mason, "is that *form of the verb* which is used when the action or state that is indicated by the verb is spoken of without reference to person, number, or time."* If we for a moment suppose the infinitive to be a verb, and thereupon consider this account of it as such, we shall find it not less extraordinary than that which assumes the word with which it it is impossible to make an assertion to be a verb. We certainly may name an action, for instance, without referring it directly to any "person" or any time—*e.g.* "*smiting*. We then use a noun, however, and not a verb. If we use the latter we *assert* an action or a state, and, of necessity, refer the action or state to a "person," singular or plural, and predicate it as the action or state of the "person," either now or at some past or coming time. It is manifestly impossible to "assert" an action which is of no "person" or of no "time," or without direct reference to both person and time. A noun may name an action as an individual thing merely; but when a verb names

* Sec. 187.

it (as it does), it names it attributively, *i.e.* refers it to a "person." To assert, literally means neither more nor less than to refer an action or a state to a "person." It is true the infinitive cannot do this, and for that sufficient reason is neither verb, nor form, nor mood of a verb.

Our author adds, "The infinitive mood has the force of a substantive."* We would add, *sometimes*. In the sentence, "*To rise* early promotes health," it has that force. It is the name of a thing individual, *i.e.* of *a rising*, and therefore a noun. In the phrase, "The right man *to speak*," it has the force of, and therefore is, an adnoun. In "He likes *to ride*," it is an adverb; whilst in "A vessel *to hold* liquor," it is a conjunction. To say that a word "has the force of" a particular part of speech is tantamount to saying that it *is* that part of speech. The infinitive is now a noun, now an adnoun, now an adverb, and now a conjunction—all parts of speech besides the verbal—which it never is, because it never has the verbal force nor function.

* Sec. 187.

Indicative and Subjunctive Moods.

We speak of these together because there is ground for the assumption that the words classed as indicative and subjunctive forms are not only verbs, but forms differing from one another to some extent, and aiming, if somewhat blindly and inefficaciously, to predicate of the same actions and states in different "modes or manners."

In the tenses we have varying forms of the verb, by means of which actions and states are predicated in different "manners," as regards the time of their occurrence or existence. These answer entirely to the definition of "moods;" are, in fact, time-moods, whose purpose is quite comprehensible. What it exactly is that the indicative and subjunctive moods aim to express it is far less easy to understand.

Mr. Mason tells us that "the indicative mood includes those forms of the verb by means of which a simple assertion can be made without reference to any other fact or event;"* and that "the subjunctive mood includes those forms of the verb by means of which a fact or event is spoken of,

* Sec. 192.

not simply and unconditionally, but as a supposition, or as contingent upon some other action or event."*

What, in Mr. Mason's estimation, a "simple assertion" may be, we can only conjecture in the vaguest way, and hence are at a loss definitely to conceive what exactly are the kind of assertions his indicative forms are supposed to make. It is clear to us, however, that some of the "verbal phrases" which he calls forms of the indicative have reference to some "other fact or event" than that they directly predicate. We allude to such verbal phrases as these: "I had smitten;" "He had been smiting;" "Thou wilt have smitten," etc. The past tense form, "I smote," does indeed predicate a smiting which has no "reference to any other fact or event;" but when I say that "I *had* smitten," a smiting is predicated, not as having taken place at an utterly indefinite past time, but as having taken place *before* some other and more recent "fact or event." In a similar way, "He had been smiting" and "Thou wilt have smitten" predicate smitings more remote or more recent than some other "fact or event."

Comparing together Mr. Mason's definitions of

the two moods, we might well suppose he intends to say that the indicative mood forms predicate actions and states as being actual and unconditional, and those of the subjunctive as being suppostitious or contingent; but whether he means to say this or not, it is certain that the indicative forms may be and are used to predicate suppostitious and contingent actions and states, just as the subjunctive forms are, and that they do it quite as efficiently and unequivocally. Thus in "I shall go if he goes," *shall go* (indicative) predicates a conditional going of *I;* that is, a going dependent on *he's* going; whilst *goes* predicates of *he* a mere suppostitious going. We should hardly call the whole assertion a "simple" one, and yet we see it effected by indicative forms alone, and see one indicative form predicating a conditional fact and the other a suppostitious one; for both of which we might well suppose subjunctive forms would be needful.

We do not in the least wonder that Mr. Mason, feeling, as from our own experience we conclude he does, how impossible it is to say exactly or even approximately what it is that the subjunctive forms do, as contradistinguished from what the indicative forms do, should give such definitions

of them as he does. We might imagine a definite office and purpose for each; but to say that each, in fact, serves any definite, distinct, or distinguishable purpose would, to our thinking, be a complete misrepresentation.

Dr. Morell, when speaking of the moods, well observes that we may regard actions as actual or as possible, and hints, rather than plainly says, that it is the office of the indicative to predicate the one kind, and of the subjunctive to predicate the other kind of actions. This would be intelligible if it were but the fact that the indicative forms are used only when actions (*and states*) are predicated as actual, and the subjunctive only when they are predicated as possible; and nothing more plausible presents itself to our mind as being the appropriate aims of these two sets of forms. The distinction between a mood actual and a mood hypothetic would be comprehensible. To constitute a perfect mood of any kind, however, it would be absolutely necessary, not only that it should predicate in a "mode or manner" distinct from that of any other mood, but that its forms should be so different from those of any other mood as not to be liable to be mistaken for them. If a subjunctive or a hypothetic mood is to predi-

cate an action or state under an aspect different from that under which an indicative or actual mood presents it, it must, not sometimes, but always, employ a varied form.

We now place in juxtaposition the forms of the two moods—

INDICATIVE.	SUBJUNCTIVE.
Present Tense.	*Present Tense.*
I love.	If I love.
Thou lovest.	If thou love (*or* lovest)
He loves.	If he love.
We love.	If we love.
You love.	If you love.
They love.	If they love.
Past Tense.	*Past Tense.*
I loved.	If I loved.
Thou lovedst.	If thou loved (*or* lovedst).
He loved.	If he loved.
We loved.	If we loved.
You loved.	If you loved.
They loved.	If they loved.

Until now we thought that *lovest* and *lovedst* were not subjunctive forms. Mr. Hamblin Smith, however,* gives the subjunctive mood forms as above, and has evidently paid much attention to this mood in particular.

* "Rudiments of English Grammar and Composition," by J. Hamblin Smith, M.A. London: Rivingtons, 1876.

We see now that the *present* subjunctive forms are identical with those of the indicative in four out of six cases, and in the *past* in five out of six. If we assume, however, with Mr. Smith, that *lovest* and *lovedst* are subjunctive as well as indicative forms, the proportion of like forms is increased to five out of seven and six out of seven.

If, predicating, say *love*, of a first person singular in the present tense, I wish to convey the idea that the action is to be understood in a mode or manner different from the mode or manner in which the indicative predicates, it is evident that I cannot do it by using the word *love*, for that is both indicative and subjunctive. And it is the same in at least nine cases out of twelve. The *form* (*i.e.* the mood) tells me nothing as to the mode or manner, and all I learn with regard to it comes either from the context or from a conjunction like *if*, *though*, *unless*, etc. It is manifest that the differing forms are altogether too few to serve the purpose they pretend to do.

Mr. Smith is at great pains to make plain the uses of the subjunctive mood, and illustrates the subject copiously. "The subjunctive mood," says he,* "is the mood of—

* Sec. 88.

"1. Suggestion as distinguished from command (imperative);

"2. Thought as distinguished from fact (indicative).

"It is called *subjunctive* because it is found chiefly in sentences attached and subordinate to a principal sentence.

"For example, after verbs of charging we may have a dependent sentence introduced by the subordinate conjunction *that*, and the verb in this sentence will be in the subjunctive mood—

"'I charge thee that thou *attend* me.'—Shakespeare.

Or again, in conditional sentences, introduced by the subordinate conjunction *if*, the subjunctive mood is frequently found—

"'If fortune *serve* me, I'll requite this kindness.'—Shakespeare."

He proceeds:* "Even in the simple sentence we sometimes find the subjunctive used to express a *wish* or an *exhortation*—

"'Now good digestion *wait* on appetite.'—Shakespeare.

"'*Break* we our watch up.'—Ibid.

"'Good night, and better health *attend* his majesty.'—Ibid.

"'This day no man *think* he has business,' etc.—Ibid." †

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* Sec. 89.

† All these four examples are of what used to be called the imperative mood. "Let it wait," "Let us break up," "Let it attend," "Let him not think." How they come to be subjunctive

And so for pages goes on the professor eloquently and lovingly to descant, but quite regardless of any known definitions, on the wondrous ins and outs, twists and turns of this wondrous mood of his. Mr. Mason, as we saw, called exhortations "imperatives;" and "requests" also. Mr. Smith calls them subjunctives. We call one-word exhortations, wishes, proposals, and requests (as we do imperatives) "sentence-words," and not verbs, nor moods thereof. If plausibilities and eloquent insistence were enough, Mr. Smith would be irresistible.

We still quote him. "The subjunctive is often found in time-sentences, introduced by *till, until, ere, before*—

> "'Doth our Law judge any man before it *hear* him?'
> "'Mount thou thy horse and hide thy spurs in him
> Till he *have* brought thee,' etc." *

In concessive sentences we use the indicative or the subjunctive, according as the concession is assumed as a *fact* or *stated* as a mere conception. †

"When the statement" (*i.e.* expressing a con-

we can no more explain than why they were ever called "imperatives." They never were words of command, but of wish or proposal. Grammatically they are like imperatives, *i.e.* as being, not verbs at all, but sentence-words.

* Sec. 155. † Sec. 156.

dition and introduced by *if*) "refers to present time, the verb *may* be in the indicative or the subjunctive when the speaker has no intention of expressing an opinion as to the condition being a *fact* or a *conception;* but when he desires to hint that, in his own opinion, the condition is a *fact,* he must use the indicative, and when he wishes to suggest that it is *not a fact,* he must use the subjunctive.*

"When the statement refers to the FUTURE, it can scarcely be regarded as more than a *conception* of what *may* happen, and the subjunctive is the proper mood.

"The tendency of modern usage is to neglect this use of the subjunctive to express a supposed future occurrence, so that we employ the inexact expression, 'If he wishes;' not merely for 'If he now wishes,' but also for 'If he shall hereafter wish.' The sense of the context generally makes the meaning clear." †

Upon which last explanation we may remark that, so long as the context makes plain what is meant, it matters little what the mood or tense is or is called, and that there is no impropriety or inexactness in using the present for a future when,

* Sec. 157. † Sec. 158.

as is then always the case, we regard the future for the nonce as a present. Nor can we well omit to protest against the strange abuse involved in making the subjunctive or the indicative forms predicate the speaker's *opinion* as to the reality or non-reality of an action or a state he thus predicates. To predicate this consistently, *i.e.* moodwise, a new mood, that of the predicator's opinion as to fact or not-fact, would be indispensable; and to introduce such a mood would be a far more legitimate proceeding than that of diverting the subjunctive and the indicative thus from their proper function of predicating the nature of the action or state itself to that of predicating the speaker's *opinion* about its reality or non-reality.

"In many cases," says Mr. Smith,* "we can explain the reason for the use of a particular mood from the general principle that the indicative is used in stating *facts*, and the subjunctive in stating conceptions." Mr. Mason led us to understand that the purpose of the subjunctive mood was to enable us to predicate of actions and states as suppositious, or contingent on other actions or events, and suppositious or contingent actions

* Sec. 151.

or states are things regarded as things possible but not as *facts*. Mr. Smith, however, inferentially admits what is the truth, that this will not *always explain* the use made of the subjunctive, or of what *is said to be* (?) the subjunctive; admits that the indicative is constantly used to state suppositions and contingencies, *e.g.* "If he *goes* I go." Mr. Smith tells us too * that, though "the subjunctive is *often* found in time-sentences introduced by *till*, *until*, *ere*, and *before*, 'the indicative is sometimes used'—

> "'He who hath bent him o'er the dead,
> *Ere* the first day of death *is* fled.'—Byron.
>
> "'Call me not fool till Heaven *hath* sent me fortune.'
> Shakespeare."

It is evident the more, the more the point is investigated, that no line, other than a quite arbitrary one, is drawn by our best writers in the use of these moods. Moreover, it is to be observed that the contingency of a state or event is mostly, if not always, as clearly indicated by an indicative as by a subjunctive form; from which we may infer that the latter may not be indispensable any more than noun case-endings.

Mr. Peile has his eyes open a little to the truth

* Note to sec. 155.

when he observes,* "The different uses of the accusative as given by grammarians may show us how (doubly emphasizing the words which follow) *much more is often put into a grammatical form than is really there;*" and when, in the next section he adds, "Language is only bound to the need of intelligibility."

In many instances given by Mr. Smith of the use of the subjunctive, we find no reasonable ground for the assumption he makes that it *is* the subjunctive which is, *in fact,* used. Thus, "Doth our Law judge before it *hear* and *know?*" seems to us a mere elliptical way of saying, "Doth our Law judge ere it *shall have heard* and *shall know?*" "Mount him till he *have* brought thee," "Till conquest *cease* and slavery *be* no more," are not, as Mr. Smith supposes, instances of the subjunctive, but of the indicative future, with *shall* or *shall have* elided, and so of many like instances; indeed, in a great majority of the numerous ones he gives. Mr. Smith's attempt to educe from the practice of our standard writers anything deserving the name of "rules" is an utter failure. He finds Shakespeare, the translators of the Bible, and other equal authorities all at sea with their

* Ch. vii. sec. 9.

grammar, and recklessly breaking through his rules.

"Modern usage" tends, as we think, in the right direction when it tends, as our author observes, "to neglect the use of the subjunctive mood." When "the context makes the meaning clear," an inflection is superfluous; for we entirely agree with Mr. Peile that "language is only bound to the need of intelligibility."

It was plain enough that the use of nominative *and objective* forms for the pronouns, *I, thou,* etc., had no real influence on the meaning of any collocation of words—that the same sense would be conveyed whether the objective form were used or not; and we believe that a result exactly parallel would come of our at once abolishing our subjunctive mood and using none but the indicative forms. For a while it would doubtless offend the ear and the notions of those accustomed to expect the subjunctive forms here and there, or who cannot rid themselves of the idea that there is a mysterious virtue in a subjunctive mood. Admitting this disadvantage, however, it would be outweighed a hundred times over by the advantage (to future times especially) of a deliverance from the immense difficulties which the use of the mood

involves. Grammarians, too, who do not take pleasure in mere obscurities and inconsistencies, should welcome the innovation, as relieving them from the impossible task of reconciling English practice as regards the subjunctive forms with any conceivably consistent theory.

Mr. Smith remarks that "the use of the simple subjunctive is rare in modern English, but the subjunctive tenses of the verbs *may*, *shall*, and *can* are of common occurrence." * There can, as we think, be no question that, by the help of *may*, *shall*, *can*, and the other "auxiliary verbs," together with conjunctions, everything can be expressed, and quite as efficiently, without as with a subjunctive mood; and that many nice and needful distinctions, besides those which any subjunctive forms could express, may be drawn by these and an indicative mood. We feel assured that nothing will avail to check the "tendency to neglect the use of the subjunctive forms," and that presently their use will become so rare that the mood will be regarded generally as a thing of the past.

* Sec. 152. The idea of "subjunctive tenses" is Mr. Smith's own. We repudiate. We said that the tenses are "time-moods," but are helpless to conceive what a subjunctive tense may mean.

Tenses.

"Tense (Latin, *tempus*, time)," says Mr. Mason, "is a variation in form in verbs, or a compound verbal phrase, indicating partly the *time* to which an action or event is referred, and partly the *completeness* or *incompleteness* of the event at the time indicated." *

A more lame account of the thing itself is not easily conceivable. An appeal to the analogy of the Latin tenses would not help our author, as it did when he contended against a "potential mood." Tense in Latin was *one* thing, and not two things, as Mr. Mason says it is in English, *i.e.* an inflection and a "verbal phrase." It was always a variation of the verb-form, *i.e.* an inflection, and never a "compound verbal phrase." The "compound verbal phrases" referred to are verbal expressions, formed by addition of the infinitive or one of the participles to tense-forms of the "auxiliaries" *be*, *have*, *shall*, and *will*.

Whatever English or classic precedent has to say on the point, we insist that "tense" is either *one* thing or *no*-thing; that, if it is an inflection, it

* Sec. 203.

cannot be "a verbal phrase." Indeed, Mr. Mason himself admits, in the next sentence, what to our thinking is obvious to common sense and altogether indisputable, that "in perfect strictness it ought to be said that a verb in English has only two tenses, the present and the past, because these alone are formed by inflection." To say anything else, to us appears, not a mere departure from strictness, but a gross abuse of words leading nowhither but to confusion of ideas.

Mr. Mason calls "I smite" not, as we do, simply "present tense" of *smite*, but "present *indefinite* tense," because, as he in effect says, it speaks of smiting without distinct reference to other events with regard to which the smiting is complete or incomplete." * "I am smiting," Mr. Mason calls "present *imperfect* tense," because, as he says, it predicates a smiting as incomplete or still going on; * whilst "I have smitten" he calls "present *perfect* tense," because it predicates a smiting as complete.*

We profess our utter inability to comprehend how a present smiting can be other than a smiting now ("still") going on, or how that can be a *present* action which is ended, *i.e.* is "complete" or "per-

* Sec. 205.

fect." If "I have smitten" predicates any smiting at all, it predicates a *past* and not a present one. "I smite" assuredly predicates a smiting now going on, and consequently must be, on Mr. Mason's own showing, an "incomplete" or "imperfect" present, as "I am smiting"—assuming it to predicate a smiting—must also be an "imperfect" for the same reason.

We join issue, however, not alone on the assumption, which our author "in strictness" gives up, that such verbal phrases as "I am smiting" and "I have smitten" are "tenses" of *smite*, but on the assumption that either of the two phrases, "am smiting" or "have smitten" predicates the *action* called smiting. "I smite" and "I smote" are true tenses, because they predicate, the one a present and the other a past *act* of smiting, and do it by a variation in the form of the verb; whereas "am smiting" predicates of *I*, not an *action*, but an active state.* In "I am smiting" there is one, and but one, verb—the so-called, or miscalled, "auxiliary," *be*. *Be* here, as always, predicates of its dominant indefinite *state*, and the participle *smiting* is a mere adverb, defining the state. Mr.

* What the phrase with *have* and the past participle predicate will be discussed under the heading, "Auxiliary Verbs."

Mason himself ignores, and very properly ignores, "auxiliary verbs." It is a shallow delusion to suppose that, for instance, in "I am smiting," *am* is a verb *helping* (or auxiliary to) the verb *smite*. *Am* is the only verb there; it is not the helper, but the helped; the participle (which is not a verb nor any part of a verb) helps the real verb (*am*) to predicate a more definite state than alone it can predicate. And this is invariably the case where a so-called auxiliary verb is used; the infinitive or participle is a mere adverb, qualifying the predication which the "auxiliary" makes. Hence we arrive at the conclusion that *smite* and *smote* are the only tense-forms of the verb *smite*, not alone because they are the only inflections of that verb, but that no part or form of the verb *smite* is used in any one of the "verbal phrases" which Mr. Mason and other grammarians confound with the inflections as tenses of that verb.

Mr. Mason's "tense," however, is not content with *being* two things instead of one, but it must forsooth *do* two things instead of one; must do the proper business of tense, *i.e.* indicate the *tempus* of the action or state predicated, and do what is no part of its business, that is, indicate

"the completeness of the event (? action or state) at the time indicated." *

"But, besides the *time* of an action," says he, "there are three ways in which an action or event (? state) may be viewed—

"1. It may be spoken of as incomplete or still going on. A tense which indicates this is called an *imperfect* tense.

"2. It may be spoken of as complete. A tense which indicates this is called a *perfect* tense.

"3. It may be spoken of without distinct reference to other events in regard to which it is complete or incomplete. A tense in which an action (? or state) is thus spoken of is called an *indefinite* tense.†

"We thus," says he, "get nine primary tenses." ‡ He adds, "Besides the nine primary tenses we have the following:—

"The present perfect of continued action; 'I have been writing.'

"The past perfect of continued action; 'I had been writing.'

"The future perfect of continued action; 'I shall have been writing.'" §

* Sec. 203. † Sec. 205.
‡ Sec. 206. § Sec. 209.

Our author here gets beyond his own definition, for he makes "tense" to be indicative of three distinct things, *i.e.* of "continued action," as well as of time and completeness. The true tense-forms (*write* and *wrote*) have no reference either to completeness or to continuance of action or state, and rightly so. The verbal phrases, if, legitimately and without risk of confusion, they could, as pointing out the *tempus* of actions and states, be called "tenses," would abuse their name and office by aiming to indicate such things as completeness and continuance.

"There are," continues Mr. Mason, "three divisions of time to which an event or a state may be referred—the present, the past, and the future. Hence, if the time of an event were the only thing to be considered, there could not be more than three tenses." * We cannot pretend to understand Mr. Mason's anxiety for a greater number. We are quite content with two, and yet we can well conceive the possibility of "tenses" more than three, and all referring to time alone. The Latins had five variations of the verb-form, each referring to a different *tempus*. They had also a sixth variation, which was called a "tense,"

* Sec. 205.

but which had the vice of aiming to indicate, not only the *tempus*, but the incompleteness of a *past* state or action. The ancients seem to have seen, what our grammarians apparently do not, that there can be but one present tense, that it is of necessity "incomplete," and that a time which is "perfect" or "completed" is necessarily a past time. They may well be supposed also to have seen, what evidently Mr. Mason does not, that a past time, without ceasing to be such, may be conceived of as recent or distant, very recent or very remote; that, in the same way, a future may be conceived of as near or very near, remote or more or less so; and that each of these modifications of past or future, may be indicated by a verbal inflection or "tense." The Latins pretended to have no more than one present tense—*amo*, "I love." In *amavi* they had a simple past, corresponding to our "I loved," *i.e.* a past having no reference to recentness or remoteness, but simply predicating a loving in *the time before the now*. In *amabo*, "I shall love," they had a simple future, predicating a loving simply in *the time after* the now. In *amaveram*, "I had loved," they had a tense predicating a loving, not in the simple past, but in a past time more remote than some other

past event or fact. In *amavero*, "I shall have loved," they had a tense predicating a loving, not simply in the future, but in a future less remote than some other future fact or event. *Amaveram* might well be characterized as a *remote* or *pre-past* tense, and *amavero* as a *near* or *ante-future* tense, whilst *amo*, *amavi*, and *amabo* are the simple present, past, and future. *Amabam*, "I was loving," we cannot admit to be a tense of *amo*; for whereas *amo* and the other four tenses predicate the *act* of loving, *amabam* predicates a mere *state* of loving. If a Latin verb existed signifying in the present, "I *am* loving," *amabam* would be its past tense.

We have no objection to make against verbal phrases as such. It is evident that, with them and our past and present tense-forms, we can and do express all that the Latins did or could do with their more numerous tenses. The "phrases," or some of them at least, may be very good *substitutes* for tenses. What we protest against is simply the misrepresentation and gross abuse of words involved in the assumption that a tense can be anything but an inflection, or can legitimately aim at anything but to indicate the *tempus* of the predicated action or state.

Few of our grammarians count, like Mr. Mason, their tenses by the dozen, whilst as few unequivocally recognize the fact that we have but two. Dr. Morell intimates his notion that the office of a tense is to indicate *time*, and makes no distinct reference to its having any other office. He calls, as we do, *write* "present tense," and *wrote* "past tense," and, in his conjugation, gives no other tenses. But instead of saying distinctly that these are the only tenses, he rather suggests that we have numerous others; for, under the heading "tense," he observes, "The English language is very rich in auxiliaries, and by their means can express more shades of meaning in the tense-relations of the verb than probably any other existing language. Thus it has a *present indefinite* (? tense), 'I love;' a *present progressive*, 'I am loving;' and a *present complete*, 'I have loved.' In the same way it can express a *past indefinite*," etc. He continues: "In addition to *all this variety of tenses*, we can make a number of emphatic forms by the use of the verb *to do;* as, 'I do love,' 'I did love;' and can again employ the *whole system of tenses* above indicated in their passive as well as their active forms." The doctor, we presume, wishes to be as orthodox as possible, and so blows hot and cold, preaches orthodoxy and practises heterodoxy.

Participles.

"The participles," says Mr. Peile, "were the great bugbears to our grammatic forefathers. What," asks he, "were these creatures, with cases like nouns, yet followed in a sentence by other nouns, just like verbs; which also, like verbs, denoted a difference of time; *doing, having done, being about to do?* No answer could be agreed upon; and a new part of speech arose, 'the metoche;' that which partakes of the nature of the noun and also of the nature of the verb; and of this term *participium* is not a very obvious rendering." *

Our "grammatic forefathers" had evidently but crude ideas with regard to the functional character of words; and hence, their resort to "a new part of speech" is more excusable than the modern improvements upon it, one of which assigns the participles to the category of verbs, another of which speaks of them, as we saw Dr. Morell doing, as participial moods, and another of which assigns to certain combinations of them the character and dignity of tenses.

* Ch. vi. sec. 13.

"There are," says Mr. Mason, "two participles formed by inflection—the imperfect participle, always ending in *ing;* and the perfect participle, ending, in what are called regular verbs, in *d* or *ed.* Besides the participles formed by inflection, there are the following compound participles:—

"Active perfect participle; 'Having struck.'

"Active perfect participle of continued action; 'Having been striking.'

"Passive indefinite participle; 'Being struck.'

"Passive perfect participle; 'Having been struck.'" *

We see here but *two* participles, and profess our inability to understand the suggestion that two or three participles, used together, make *another* participle; whilst we can well see that the suggestion that we have six, instead of two, participles has a tendency to obfuscate the mind.

Already it has been pointed out that both participles are constantly in use as conjunctions. Mr. Mason says that they "are verbal adjectives differing from ordinary adjectives in this, that the active participle can take a substantive after it as its object." † What this difference means or amounts

* Secs. 200 and 202. † Sec. 200.

to we have not the remotest conception.* When we speak, for instance, of "a *singing* bird" or "a *heated* oven," the participles are pure adjectives, and, as such, we discover no real distinction between them and adjectives in general.

In the "compound verbal phrases," which Mr. Mason miscalls "tenses," the participles always perform the adverbial function, qualifying the state or action which the "auxiliary" predicates. Thus in "He is *smiting*" or "He is *smitten*," the participle defines the state which *is* affirms of *he*; in the one case as an active (smiting) state, and in the other as a state resultant from a past smiting—a smitten state.

We thus see that each participle may be either a conjunction, an adnoun, or an adverb. The "imperfect participle" is also very frequently a noun; *e.g.* "A *beating* would do him good."

Both participles have this in common with the verbs from which they are derived, that they *refer* to the same actions and states; and this will, no doubt, account for the fact, so far as any account can be given, that they are set down as verbs. In

* We are specially puzzled to understand how a peculiarity in the active participle can make, not only that, but the other participle also, different from an ordinary adjective.

the "verbal phrases" alluded to they certainly *help* to make assertions, just as any other adverb does; but, in the essential point which should establish their verbality, that is, in their ability to *assert* of a dominant, they are exactly in the same predicament as the infinitive. As with it, so with either of them, it is not possible to make an assertion.*

Auxiliary Verbs

are arranged by Dr. Morell as follows:—

1. Auxiliary of voice; *be.*
2. Auxiliaries of mood; *may, can,* and *must.*
3. Auxiliaries of tense; *have, shall,* and *will.*
4. Auxiliary of emphasis and interrogation; *do.*

"An auxiliary verb," says he, "is one which is used to *assist other verbs* in expressing some particular form of voice, mood, or tense." †

Mr. Mason will none of these "auxiliary verbs,"

* We might fairly assume that the ancients saw this and so escaped the modern absurdity of classing the participles as verbs.

† *Do* does not assist in forming the "verbal phrases" known as voice, mood, or tense. With infinitives and *do*, emphatic and interrogative expressions are made. In the emphatic expressions, however, *do* is the verb and only verb, and not an assistant or auxiliary to some other verb. In the interrogative expressions *do* is not a verb at all. (*Vide* "Sentence-Words," *post.*)

and refers to them as the "*so-called* auxiliary verbs." With him, *have* and *be* rank as ordinary verbs, whilst he distinguishes *shall*, *will*, *may*, *must*, *can*, and *ought* from ordinary verbs only as "defective verbs," because, as he over-hastily assumes, they have less tense and mood forms than others. We agree that to describe them as "auxiliary verbs" misrepresents them, because it assumes, as Dr. Morell puts it, that they "assist other verbs to form voice, moods, and tenses." Mr. Mason's verb conjugation takes for granted that they do this, and so conflicts with his tacit assumption that there are no such things as auxiliary verbs. We have here only to repeat that it is a delusion either to suppose that these verbs *help* (or are auxiliary to) others at all, or to suppose that the "verbal phrases" formed by them and by participles or infinitives are forms of the verbs whose participles or infinitives are thus used. We repeat what we have previously in substance said, that in such cases there is not a principal and an auxiliary verb, that there is but one verb, namely, the so-called or miscalled "auxiliary," and that the participle or infinitive is a mere adverb qualifying the assertion which the "auxiliary" makes.

So much for the name, "auxiliary verbs."

Whatever we call them, however, they are most important words, in use, and deserve all the special attention we purpose to devote to them here.

The Verb "Be."

Be always asserts, of its dominant, state or existence, in the same general (indefinite) way in which *do* asserts activity (doing) of its dominant. Thus in the sentence, "It is," *is* predicates of *it* a state, in the now time, of the utmost generality; leaves it quite uncertain whether, for instance, we speak of *it* as being in a live or dead state, cold or warm, real or ideal. By adding one of those words, or any other "adjective," the predicated general state becomes specific. It is not alone by adjectives, however, that we define the state which *be* predicates. We may say, "She is *rich;*" "They are *soldiers;*" "We are *smiting* or *smitten;*" "You are *to return;*" using words which our grammars call adjectives, nouns, and verbs. It is certainly a misrepresentation to call these words, so used, either adjectives, nouns, or verbs. Their function is clearly adverbial, and, if they are to be called by a name which implies that they are a part of speech, "adverb" is the name of one and all.

Verbs, as we have seen, cannot be divided into transitives and intransitives. They might probably be divided into actives and passives—the former including all those which predicate *doing*, and the latter all those that predicate *being*. The former we have called "force-words;" the latter are "*be*-words," and include the verb *be* itself and a small number of others, *e.g. appears, beseems, behoves*, and several of the so-called auxiliary verbs. These (except *be*) assert specific states, as all force-words, except *do*, assert specific doings. They are, in their significance, what we should call compounds of *be* and an adverb, as force-words in general are compounds of *do* and the adverb called "present participle." *Can*, for instance, is a compound of *be* and *able; must*, of *be* and *compelled; appears*, of *be* and *apparent;* and so on; just as *strike* is a compound of *do* and *striking*. The "*be*-words" are comparatively few, not because the variety of states which might be predicated thus are so much fewer than the variety of actions which force-words predicate, but that it is the fashion of the language to predicate specific states for the most part by the verb *be* itself, with an added word or words (adverb).

The states which *be* predicates may be defi-

nitized by the present participle. The result is, not an *action*, such as a force-word predicates, but a *state of activity*. "I smite" asserts that *I* does the action of smiting; "I am smiting," that *I* is in a *state* which *smiting* describes. Practically, the difference between an active state and exercising activity may not be easily appreciated by rough-and-ready speakers, but there is as real a difference in the things as in the words—the difference, namely, between being and doing.

Force-words have generally three forms in which they predicate of actual *present* actions; *e.g. love, lovest, loves*; that is, just three times as many as needful. *Be* has four forms in which it predicates actual present state—*am, art, is, are*. In the past tense *be* has three forms—still one more than any other verb. In the present subjunctive it has but one form—*be*, whilst, in the past subjunctive, *were* and *wert* are used.

We noticed before that the subjunctive forms were, in general, quite incapable of predicating (of themselves) of actions or states in a "mode or manner" different from that in which the indicative forms predicate of their dominant. It is so also with the present subjunctive forms of *be*. For instance, "I be strong" or "Be I strong" pre-

dicate (if anything) exactly what "I am strong" or "Am I strong?" do. The past subjunctive forms of *be*, however, are peculiar in that, with them and without any such conjunction as *if*, we may predicate state hypothetically. Thus if I say, "Were I in your place;" "Wert thou honest;" "Were he a man," I do not assert any actual state, but predicate of the dominant a hypothetic state. In other cases, I must use *if* or some other conjunction when I desire to predicate hypothetically. There is one, and we believe but one, other verb wherewith this can be done—*have*, namely, in the past subjunctive; *e.g.* "*Had* he been there;" "*Had* he done it." *

It may be well to note, however, that these past subjunctive forms of *be* do not predicate, as we might expect, of a *past* hypothetic state, but of a present. Thus, "Wert thou a man, thou wouldst," etc., assumes the possibility, not that thou *wast* a man, but that thou *art* a man now.†

* With these two verbs, *were* and *had*, subjunctive assertions may be made (hypothetic ones) of a dominant which follows. In all other cases the dominant precedes, and does so with *were* and *had* when a conjunction is used; *e.g.* "If I were;" "Though I had."

† The *present* subjunctive form, *be*, has reference to the future quite as often as to the present. "If he *be* caught," for instance, refers to a hypothetic future catching, and is equivalent to "If he *shall* or *should be* caught."

Dr. Morell calls *do* the auxiliary of interrogation. If he rightly so characterizes it, he should have added *be, have, will, may, can, must,* and other *be*-words; for with them, as with *do*, questions are asked; *e.g.* "*Are* you going?" "*Have* you sold it?" "*Will, can, may,* or *must* he go?"

The Verb "Have."

When followed by a past participle, the verb *have* is supposed to *help* in the formation of tenses of the verb to which the participle belongs, and is then commonly said to be an "auxiliary verb." In other cases it is called a "principal verb," and is supposed to have a meaning different from that which it has when used with a past participle. In "He had money," *had* is said to predicate as a principal verb; whilst in "He has gone out," it is said to predicate as an auxiliary of the verb *go*. In the first case it predicates a holding or keeping in possession; what it predicates as an auxiliary we proceed to inquire.

In "I *have sold* my horse," we have, in effect, said that there is no tense of *sell*, but only a tense of *have*, modified or adverbialized by the past participle *sold*. Mr. Mason would call *have sold*

"present perfect tense" of *sell*. We are prepared to admit that it is a tolerable *substitute* for a tense, but deny that it is even a substitute for a *present* tense. The selling referred to is assuredly a past act—a thing done, and not now doing. The act of selling predicated is certainly *now*, a completed or *perfected* act; but for that reason a *past* and not a present one. How a present action can be a "perfect" or completed one, to us is inconceivable, and it is an equal mystery to us how a *past act* can be other than a "perfect" one.

I sold, Mr. Mason calls "indefinite past." We prefer to call it "past" or "simple past." It predicates a selling in past time, without reference to any other event; to its recentness or remoteness, or, in short, to anything but the before-now. We may equally well say, "He sold his horse before or since Easter," or "He sold it this morning or ten years ago." We cannot, however, so use the "verbal phrase" with *have*. We may well say, "He has sold his horse this morning" or "since Easter;" but there is a manifest incongruity if we say, "He has sold it ten years ago" or "before Easter." *Has sold* is appropriate when a *recent* past time is referred to, but not so when a remote past time is spoken of or even suggested. It

appears to us to be a substitute for a recent-past tense.

"He *had* sold his horse" asserts that, before some more recent, but past, fact or event, a selling had taken place. *Had* predicates of a time in the past *more remote* than some past fact or event. We would describe it as a substitute for a pre-recent-past tense. The Latins, as we saw, had a tense of this kind, though none answering to what we have spoken of as a "recent-past tense."

How *have* and *had* come to serve the purpose of forming substitutes for a recent-past and a pre-recent-past tense is explicable, as we think, if we regard *have* in such cases as expressing what it does when it is called a principal verb, *i.e.* a holding or keeping in possession. Thus, "I have sold my horse" seems, so far as it can be supposed *literally* to say aught, to say that *I* has, in himself, an indefinite somewhat which *sold a horse* defines. The nearest approximation as to how *sold a horse* can be supposed to define *I's* having is to read it as if it were "the result of a horse sold." If, then, we assume that "I have sold a horse" means that I have in myself the result of a horse-selling

which took place in the past, the transition to a recent-past tense becomes appreciable. For, if I *have* in me *now* the effect of a past horse-selling—the price in my pocket, ability to pay debts, satisfaction, or the contrary, for instance—the natural inference is that the sale must have taken place recently. We do not pretend to justify this mode of stating a fact of having, in order, not that the fact stated may be understood, but that an inferential fact may be understood; nor do we say that a "verbal phrase" thus compounded is an unobjectionable substitute for a recent-past or a pre-recent-past tense.* On the contrary, it seems to us a clumsy contrivance, and altogether unaccountable except on the theory we have broached. On this theory the assertion that "he *had* sold a horse," would literally imply that he had, *in a past time* (not *now*, as "he has sold" implies), the result of a horse-selling which took place *then* recently before.

* *Have* and *had* are the only assertative words. *Have sold* and *had sold* predicate no selling at all, but a simple present and a simple past *having;* and the recent-past and pre-recent-past *selling* are arrived at by taking a great liberty with words. Whether such a liberty is justifiable depends entirely on whether the idea can be expressed in any less objectionable way. We call *had sold* "pre-recent-past," because it predicates of a selling *before* some more recent-past fact or event. It might equally well be characterized as a *more remote*-past.

Infinitives are also used to adverbialize *have* and *had,* but these compounds are never called tenses. In the sentence, "They had to call at the house," the sense of *to call* is *an obligation to call;* and it defines *he's* past having as the having of such an obligation. Much the same sense is involved in the infinitive after the verb *be; e.g.* "I am *to call;*" and these are instances which, by their parallelism, seem to lend probability to our supposition that *sold a horse,* after *have,* is to be read off as if it were "the results of a sold horse."

The Verbs "Shall" and "Will," "Should" and "Would."

It has already been observed that, in English, there is no future tense. The office of a recent-past tense and of a pre-recent-past tense we have seen done by *have* and *had,* with past participles subjoined; that of a future tense is performed by verbal expressions compounded of the verbs *shall* and *will,* with the infinitives of other verbs. *Shall* is used when the actions or states to be asserted are those of first persons (*I* or *we*); and *will,* when the actions or states are those of the second

persons (*thou* or *you*) or of third persons (*he*, *she*, *it*, or *they*)—

I shall go.	We shall go.
Thou wilt go.	You will go.
He will go.	They will go.

The German future tense *substitute* is formed by one verb (*werden*, "to become") with infinitives—

Ich werde gehen.	Wir werden gehen.
Du wirst gehen.	Ihr werdet gehen.
Er wird gehen.	Sie werden gehen.

And, seeing that, with one verb, the same thing is done which we do by two, as effectively, more conveniently, and less equivocally, we are constrained to admit that the German is a better contrivance than ours.

The French, like the classic languages, has a real future tense, that is, an inflection by which each verb is made to assert its particular activity or state as a future, or not-yet-realized, activity or state. Thus, one word does that for which, in English or German, two are needed, *i.e.* a verb (auxiliary) and an adverb (infinitive)—

J'irai.	Nous irons.
Tu iras.	Vous irez.
Il ira.	Ils iront.

In respect of brevity, this is better than either German or English. Moreover, the one word

predicates *unequivocally* a mere future activity. So much cannot be said for the English future tense substitute.

Shall and *will* are called "signs of the future." *Shall* is only so when predicating of a first person, and not necessarily so even then; for "I *shall* go;" may predicate either my intention of going or the fact that a going will take place hereafter. In "Thou *shalt* go," *shalt* predicates neither *thou's* intention nor the simple future fact, but that *thou* is to be constrained to go; and it is the same when *shall* predicates of a third person. This last seems to be the primary sense of *shall*, and this sense is to be traced in it even when I say, "I *shall* go," meaning that I intend it; for my intention to do a thing implies a purpose and a power, in me subjective, to compel my objective self to do the thing intended. That *shall* primarily imports a purpose and a power in the speaker of exercising constraint may account for the fact that *shall* is deemed an appropriate form with reference to the speaker himself, and not so with regard to those he addresses or speaks of. There is no impropriety, though I wish merely to predicate of myself a future act, in using a word like *shall*, which imports constraint of myself (*i.e.*

of the objective self by the subjective self or will), such as there would be if that word were used to predicate a mere future action of a second or third person, with the suggestion that I (the speaker) have power and purpose to constrain that person to its performance.

If I say, "Thou *wilt*" or "he *will go*," there is no suggestion that I can or intend to *compel* the going. It is rather that *thou* or *he* is *willing*, or *wills*, to go; in which suggestion there is no impropriety. We do not suppose that these are adequate reasons why *shall* and *will*, or either of them, should be used as future signs. As we have already said, we consider that an inflected form (*i.e.* a tense) would be preferable.

The use of two different verbs as signs of our future verbal phrase is, to foreigners, one of the most puzzling things in the English language. They rarely learn to use them in the way we regard as correct, and the same difficulty exists for them in the use of *should* and *would*. Strangely enough, our fellow-countrymen of Lesser Britain confound these words in use almost as foreigners do. The natural conclusion is, what we might otherwise infer, that our contrivance, whatever its origin, is needlessly complex.

That the forms *should* and *would* are derived from *shall* and *will* we see no reason to question, but we are quite at a loss to understand on what ground *should* is represented, as it is by both Dr. Morell and Mr. Mason, as a past-tense form of *shall*. As "signs of the future," neither *shall* nor *will* can be modified so as to have reference to a past time. It is obvious that a *past future* is a mere solecism, a thing inconceivable, and therefore inexpressible; or, if we suppose "I shall go" to mean "I *intend* to go," "I *should* go" cannot signify (as it must if it were past tense of *shall*, implying intent) "I *intended* to go." Nor can *should* assert as a past fact of *he* what *shall* asserts as a present fact, in "He *shall* go," meaning he is to be constrained to go. *Should* may assert a *present* duty or obligation; *e.g.* "He *should* reflect on it;" but in no instance, so far as we are aware, does or can it assert of a *past* state, action, or event. Its most usual office is to predicate of hypothetic states, actions, or events; *e.g.* "I should go if he came;" and for this reason we recognize in some sort the propriety of calling *should*, as Dr. Morell does, "a verb of mood."*

* *Shall* and *should* cannot be classed either as "force-words" or as "*be*-words." Alone, they predicate neither an action nor a

Would is occasionally a past tense of *will*. Thus, "He *would* do it" may mean that he *was minded* or determined to do it; and, so understood, asserts as a past fact what "He will do it" (understood as he *is minded* or determined to do it) asserts as a present fact. But when *will* imports a present willingness on the part of the dominant, *would* is not its past tense, any more than it is the past tense of *will* as a future sign. Like *should, would* may be called a verb of mood, as predicating, most usually, of hypothetic states, actions, or events. *Should*, as a verb of mood, predicates of a state or action which would be realized on the occurrence of some outward event; whilst *would*, as a verb of mood, predicates always a hypothetic willingness of the dominant. Thus, whilst "I should go if he came" predicates a going of me as an event which would take place if *he* came, "I would go if he came" predicates, not a mere event (my going), but an exercise of my will (to go) in case he came.

Should, and *would*, moreover, do not predicate of

state. With the help of the adverbs (infinitives) which follow, they predicate both—the character of the adverb decides which; *e.g.* "I shall or should *go*;" "I shall or should *be* happy." In this sense *shall* and *should* are "defective" verbs as well as in having no past-tense forms.

past hypothetic actions or states, but of actions or states realizable in the *future*. Thus, in "I should go if he came," *should go* refers to an action possible in the future; whilst in "I would go if he came," the reference is to a future exercise of my will. If a past possibility has to be predicated, *should have* or *would have* must be employed, that is, *should* and *would* must be adverbialized by *have*. "I *should have* done it but for that;" "He *would have* fallen if I had not supported him;" "It *would have been* done had he not come."

It has already been observed that the Latin *amaveram* was a modified-future tense form. Our verbal phrase for it—"shall" or "will have loved"—is, of course, a substitute for the nearer, or less remote, future of the Latins. Used with *shall* or *will*, *have* does not refer to the past, as when used with *should* or *would* or with past participles. It cannot, of course, modify a future into a past, but it brings the future nearer; thus: "In a month he will have finished it." Here *will have* predicates of a future less distant, by a month.

The Verb "May."

Like *shall* and *will*, this verb has more than one meaning. In the question, "May I go?" and in the answer, "You may go," it asks and grants *permission;* but if the *may* be emphasized, "You *may* go," *may* then predicates, not permission, but the actual present *possibility* of the dominant's going. This last is the most usual, and probably the primary, sense of *may; e.g.* "I may go;" "He may succeed;" "They may be blamed."

Might always predicates possibility, but not a past possibility as contradistinguished from the present possibility which *may* predicates. Nor does it predicate *actual* possibility, like *may*. "I might go" is not, like "I may go," a complete sentence. It requires a statement of the contingency upon which the possibility of my going depends; thus: "I might go if the weather should be fine." *Might*, like *should* and *would*, has reference to the future rather than to the past, and, like them, is a modal rather than a tense form. It predicates a suppostitious and not an actual possibility; and herein lies the distinction between it and *may*, and not, as our grammars lead us to

infer, that one is present and the other past tense of the same verb.

Past possibilities may be predicated by *may* and *might* in conjunction with *have*. Thus "I may have said so" implies that it is (actually) possible that I *did* say so; whilst "I might have done it had I been asked" implies that my doing of it was not an actual, but a contingent, possibility. So that it is here, as in the case of *should* and *would*, the verb *have* that effects the reference to past time, and not *might*, any more than *may*.

The Verb "Can."

Can has but one meaning. It always predicates present actual ability. *Could* occasionally predicates a past actual ability. It is then the past tense, but more usually it is a modal or subjunctive form, of *can*, predicating a hypothetic or conditional ability. Thus "I *can* do it" asserts my present actual ability to do it; whilst "He *could* do it" may mean either that he *was* at a past time actually *able* to do it, or that he *would be able* under hypothetic circumstances to do it.

The *action* to which *could* refers is always one in the future when *could* is hypothetic. If reference

is to be made to a past hypothetic action, that is, to an action that was possible, *could have* must be used. *Could have* is always hypothetic, and an "expression" equivalent to a past tense of the hypothetic *could*.

The Verbs "Must" and "Ought."

Both these are truly "defective verbs" in Mr. Mason's sense, as having none other than a present-tense form, and none which can be supposed to be a subjunctive mood. If we admitted Dr. Morell's suggestion that *can* with infinitives could constitute a potential mood, we must admit that these would, with infinitives—"I must go;" "He ought to come"—constitute other moods (of necessity and duty). As, with Mr. Mason, we repudiated the first, we do the same with the two last.

ADVERB.

"AN adverb," says Dr. Morell,* "is *a word which is used to qualify any attribute.*" He continues, by way of explanation, "All our notions, as expressed in words, may be divided into two main classes: (1) notions of things themselves (whether concrete or abstract); and (2) notions of qualities or actions which we *attribute* to them. When we express our notion of a *thing*, we employ the noun; when we attribute any *action* or *quality* to the noun, we employ the verb or the adjective. Every sentence must consist fundamentally of these two portions —the noun and the attribute; the noun expressing the thing which we speak about, the attribute expressing what we have to say or affirm respecting it.

"Just in the same way as we qualify the *noun*, or name, by placing an adjective by the side of it, so we qualify any word that expresses an *attribute* by

* Page 19.

connecting an adverb with it. Moreover, as the adverb itself expresses an *attribute* of the verb or adjective, we may use one adverb to qualify another.

"Accordingly the adverb qualifies three parts of speech—

"1. The adjective; *i.e.* the simple attribute.

"2. The verb; *i.e.* the attribute with assertion combined.

"3. The adverb; *i.e.* the attribute of another attribute."

We have and can have no ideas other than of things individual and of the circumstances which affect or modify them. Hence speech, as the representative of thought, consists and must consist solely of the names of things individual and of the names of those circumstances; that is to say, of (1) nouns, and (2) of words which attribute to nouns. The noun has but one function, whilst attributive words, as influencing the noun in different ways, are divisible into several parts of speech. The adnoun, for instance, attributes distinctive qualities; the verb, states and actions; and the conjunction, relations.

The absurdity of calling by the name "adverb" the word that adds nothing to, and has no influence

whatever on, a verb-predicate was observed upon under the heading "Adnoun." In the phrase, "a very large house," we there showed that *very* was merely an adnoun of a peculiar nature, an adnoun which would not directly modify the noun's individuality like adnouns in general, but one which could reach the noun only by influencing a quality in it susceptible of degree. Consequently, we described it and the other words which influence the noun through such a quality, not as "adverbs," but as "adnouns of degree."

No one, though admitting, as all must, that every part of speech is, either an *attributee, i.e.* a noun, or an *attributor* to a noun, pretends that there should be for that reason but *two* parts of speech. Nor is it pretended that the attributive parts of speech should be divided according as they attribute to the noun directly or indirectly, at one remove, at two, or at three. If we do not, because both adnoun and verb attribute to the noun directly, hesitate to call them different parts of speech, there is no conceivable reason why three kinds of words should be lumped together as "adverbs" because they all attribute to the noun indirectly.*

* There might be rather more plausibility in the thing if these three kinds were the only ones attributing to the noun indirectly.

The adverb which qualifies directly the verb-predicate attributes to the noun at two removes, just as the adnoun of degree does. Both are *secondary* attributives, but we call the one "adverb" and the other "adnoun," because the first modifies the verb-predicate, and the other does not, but modifies the noun through an adnounal quality.

The word called "adverb," because it qualifies another adverb, attributes to the noun, not at two merely, but at three removes. It is not a secondary, but a *ternary*, attributive. That fact, however, we say, is irrelevant to the question—What part of speech is it? If it modifies the verb-predicate it is an adverb, equally whether it reaches it at one or at two removes.

Many of the same words that qualify adnouns susceptible of degree, like *very, rather, tolerably*, are the words that qualify adverbs, *e.g.* "He ran *very* fast;" "He spoke *rather* slowly;" "I feel *tolerably* well." Such words will not influence a verb predicate directly, any more than they will a noun. Before they can have their effect, a quality susceptible of degree, as fastness, slowness, or wellness,

The conjunction, however, does so always when it attaches a sentence. Thus, in "He rose, *but* sank again," *but* attributes something adversative, not to *he's* individuality, but to *he's* act (rising).

must be introduced by a previous adverb. *Very*, then, can influence the running through its fastness, *rather*, the speaking through its slowness, and *tolerably*, the feeling through its wellness. Thus we arrive at the conclusion that the words which qualify the adverb are secondary adverbs or adverbs of degree.*

During our progress we have seen the necessity of excluding from the adverbial category, not only the words we have called "adnouns of degree," but also numerous connective words, like *when*, *while*, *whereof*, etc., and the words inflected for the comparative and superlative degrees; whilst we have found it necessary to admit into it many words commonly classed as adjectives—those, namely, that qualify the predicate of the verbs *be*, *seem*, etc.; others, classed as nouns and qualifying the predicate of verbs-active (force-words); and finally the infinitives and participles when contributing to form the "verbal phrases" miscalled "tenses" and "passive voice."

We understand an adverb to be simply a word

* It may be doubtful whether all the words that qualify the adnounal attribute are adnouns *of degree*, or all those that qualify the adverbial attribute adverbs of degree. It is only material to our purpose to establish the adnounal character of the former and the adverbial character of the latter.

whose primal purpose is to qualify the action or state which the verb predicates. Whether it affects it directly or indirectly seems to us a matter of indifference, and equally so the question whether the word, now qualifying a verb, may at other times or more usually perform the nounal, the adnounal, or the conjunctional function.*

* Thus we call *child*, *strong*, and *up* (usually called noun, adjective, and preposition) "adverbs" in sentences like these: "He was a *child*;" "She seemed *strong*;" "They climbed *up*."

INTERJECTION.

It is somewhat hastily assumed that any sound uttered by human voice-organs, and which is customarily represented by alphabetic characters, is a *word.* Mr. Mason tells us that "interjections are *words* which are used to express some emotion of the mind, but do not enter into the *construction* of sentences; as, *oh! O! ah! ha! alas! fie! pshaw! lo! hurrah! yes, yea, ay, no,* etc." *

We must except to the assumption that sounds such as those represented by *oh! O! ah! ha!* are "words;" and, *à fortiori,* that they are "parts of speech." Man is not the only animal endowed with voice, though he has a voice-organism which is far more complex than that of any other creature. Nor is man peculiar as having emotions and the capacity of expressing them by vocal sounds. Most, if not all, animals have feelings and many of them express, that is, give vent to, them in

* Sec. 293.

exclamatory sounds. However varied the vocal sounds used by an animal to express its varied emotions, we should not admit that therefore it possessed the gift of speech, or that the sounds, however clearly they might mark specific emotions, were "words."

Words, and expressions of emotion are essentially different things. Men agree about the sounds they will use to express their ideas, but neither men nor animals about the sounds they will use to express their feelings. Between the feeling that is expressed and the sound that expresses it there is some natural or physical connection of cause and effect, whilst between an idea and the word that symbolizes it there is none but a conventional relation. Words represent, not feelings, but thoughts; not things in sensation, but things in contemplation; products of reflection, ideas, or pictures which the mind has formed.

When it is said that interjections "do not enter into the construction of sentences," the meaning is, that every interjection is in itself an assertion. It is not the fact, and we presume there is no intention to say that the assertion cannot be enlarged or modified by other sentences, phrases, or words. The added sentence, phrase, or word,

however, though it will "enlarge" the interjectional assertion, of course does nothing towards building or constructing it. It is complete in itself, and hence needs no help towards completion.

We make no question that such expressions as *alas! fie! pshaw! lo! hurrah! yes, yea, ay,* and *no* are "words." They, like the imperatives, which we have already dealt with, do not enter into the construction of speech, because each is in itself a speech in one word, or, as we would say, a "sentence-word." *Alas!* for instance, is an expression of regret; *fie!* of reproach; *pshaw!* of disgust; and so on. But they are more. Each of them is an *assertion* that the speaker at the moment experiences the feeling which the expression refers to, and not a mere indefinite feeling such as *ah!* and *oh!* refer to, but a definite one which has been realized in thought.

Dr. Morell defines the interjection as "a word which expresses any sudden wish or emotion of the mind, but no definite thought." "Interjections," says he, "may express—

"1. Sudden joy; as, *hurrah!*

"2. Sudden sorrow or pain; as, *ah! alas!*

"3. Sudden approbation; as, *bravo!*

"4. Sudden surprise; as, *oh! ha! heigh!*

"5. Sudden displeasure; as, *oh fie! pooh!*

"6. Sudden desire with respect to others; as, *hush! hallo!*" *

We see nothing particularly *sudden* in the emotion which such words as *hurrah! alas! bravo!* etc., express, and note that suddenness does not enter into Mr. Mason's definition of the interjection. *Oh! ah! ha!* and *O!* are sudden expressions of emotion, and often mere involuntary results of a sensation. The other illustrations given by Dr. Morell and by Mr. Mason are expressions of thought, and, as we think, of tolerably "definite thought." The distinction between a word and a noise might, as it seems to us, be approximately indicated by saying that the one expresses a definite thought, the other no *thought* at all.

All the interjections which are words are, like the imperatives, not "parts of speech," but "sentence-words." Mr. Mason calls *lo!* an interjection. Dr. Morell considers *hush!* an interjection. To our minds they are sentence-words of the imperative class, and undistinguishable from ordinary imperatives.

Yes, yea, ay, no, have this in common with imperative and exclamatory or interjective sentence-

* Page 91.

words, that each is a complete assertion, and no one of them a part of speech. They certainly do not come within the definition of the interjection as given by either one of our authors. They do not "express emotion," sudden or other, and do express "a definite thought." Indeed, we were not a little surprised to find them classed by Mr. Mason as interjections; and came to the conclusion that, not knowing what to do with them as parts of speech, and not recognizing words which are whole speeches, and not parts of speech, he lumped them with that class to which they had a resemblance in some respect, if not exactly as ejaculatory words.*

The Greek grammarians, though as unlucky as modern grammarians in failing to assign the participles to their proper category, were, as Mr. Peile well observes, wiser than they as regards the interjection. "The wiser Greeks had not,"

* *Yes* or *no* may certainly be used interjectively; *i.e.* when they are not responsive words, but expressions of concurrence or disagreement, for instance, with some sentiment or opinion uttered by a speaker. Any single ejaculatory word we should call an interjection, whether it expresses an emotion or not. *Indeed! really! true! right! hit! missed! wrong! surely!* etc., are, to our thinking, interjective sentence-words, just as *hurrah! alas!* or any of the illustrative words given by either Dr. Morell or Mr. Mason.

says he, "allowed it a place," * meaning amongst their parts of speech. Elsewhere Mr. Peile observes, what we would hope has here been made sufficiently manifest as regards the interjective *word*, that, "so far from being a part of speech, the interjection is in itself a whole speech, though undeveloped and vague." †

* Ch. vi. sec. 13. † Ibid., sec. 10.

SENTENCE-WORDS.

REPEATED allusion has been made to the fact that all words are not "parts of speech." If grammarians had distinctly realized what it is they mean when they say that a word is a "part of speech," the subject which they profess to teach would have been far more comprehensible, more self-consistent, and more simple than it is. We repeat that a "part of speech" is a word (or may be a combination of words) used in the *construction* of a phrase or of a sentence, and that it is a *particular* part of speech, according as it performs a particular function in building up a phrase or a sentence. No word or combination of words is *per se* a part of speech. It only becomes such when performing its function in an actual phrase or sentence. The same word, as we have over and over again observed, may be any one of several different parts of speech, because, in phrase or

sentence building, it may now perform one, and now quite a different, function.

In the imperatives, in the interjective words, and in the responsive words we find, not material for phrase or sentence building, but assertions complete in a single word. A phrase (a description of something) we call "a speech," and not a "part of speech." A sentence, *i.e.* a combination of words by which an assertion is made, is not a part of, but a whole, speech. The *parts* of speech are the words or expressions that go to make up a phrase or a sentence. Hence a word that, standing alone, makes a complete assertion (as *go, alas! no*) is not a part of, but a whole, speech, and such words may appropriately be named "sentence-words."

The imperatives, the interjectives, and the responsives are not, however, the only species of sentence-words.

When treating of the pronoun, we reserved those called "interrogative" for consideration under the present heading. If I ask, "Who gave you that book?" it is not generally supposed that I make an assertion. A little consideration, however, will make it evident that every question is, in fact, an assertion. "*Who* gave you that book?" is an

assertion that the person who asks, desires information as to a *person*. If I demand, "*Which* book did he give you?" "*What* is its title?" "*Whether* will you stay or go?" it is clear that, in each instance, I assert, of myself, a desire for information. I may ask questions, too, without using the so-called "interrogative pronouns"—may express my desire for information by using the so-called auxiliary verbs, *do, did, will, would, shall, should:* "*Do* you wish it?" "*Did* you, *will* you, or *shall* you call?"

On what ground it is possible to maintain that *who? which? what? whether?* used thus, are pronouns, we cannot conceive, any more than we can understand how *do, did, will, shall, should,* or *would,* when used interrogatively, are verbs. To us they are all of one character. Each is a sentence-word; each a word assertative of the fact that the speaker himself desires information from the person he addresses. The one word *who?* is equivalent to "I desire of you information (as to a person);" *which?* to "I desire of you information (as to a thing);" *what?* to "I desire of you information (as to something pertaining to a person or thing);" and *whether?* to "I desire information of you (as to which one of two things.)" In the one

word called "interrogative pronoun" the sentence is complete. It needs no "construction." Other words may, of course, be added, but their effect is merely to define the person, etc., to which the interrogative sentence-word less definitely refers. Thus, "gave you that book" does nothing more than define the person, of whom inquiry is made by *who*, as the he or she who gave a book to *you* whom I address. In "Which book did he give you?" *book* but defines the indefinite "thing" that *which?* inquires about; whilst *did he give you* defines the book as the one he gave you.

Do, interrogative, always asks information as to a *present doing; did*, as to a *past doing; shall* and *will*, as to *future actions* or *states; should* and *would*, as to *hypothetic actions or states*. *Are* and *were*, used interrogatively, express the speaker's desire for information as to *present* or *past states*. Every one of these words, thus used, constitutes the equivalent of a complete sentence, exactly as *who? which? what?* or *whether?* do; and the words we add to them simply *enlarge* the one-word sentence, or, more strictly, *define* the state or the action about which the one word inquires.

Dr. Morell calls *do* "the auxiliary verb of interrogation," and seems, no more than other

grammarians, to suspect, what is the fact, that no interrogative word can be a verb.* Grammarians, recognizing that a verb is a word which enters into the construction of sentences, and which asserts of a noun or pronoun which they call "the subject," jump to the conclusion that the noun or pronoun which follows the interrogative *do* is "the subject," the thing, namely, of which *do* asserts. If, for a moment, we consider what it is that, in "Do *you* wish it?" *do* asserts of *you*, it will be evident that *do* asserts nothing with regard to *you*, and that it is a complete illusion to suppose that *you* is the subject. *Do* asserts, like all sentence-words, of the speaker himself. If it were a verb, its subject would be *I*, understood. As it is not a verb, it can, of course, have no subject. *Do* here asserts that the speaker (*I*) desires information with regard to some present doing. *You* does not, as grammarians dream, name the person who does, *i.e.* the subject. Its function is to define "the object." † It indicates that the doing about

* That is, an English verb. It is, like the Latin verb, the assertative word and the dominant in one; synthetic, not analytic, speech.

† We speak here of the verb-*object* in the sense we attached to it when dealing with transitive and intransitive verbs. The "object" of *do* is *doing*; of *go*, *going*; and so on.

which I desire information is yours. We might, indeed, well regard the inquiry, "Do you wish it?" as a complex sentence, consisting of a sentence-word, *do*, and a sentence, "you wish it,"—the latter defining the doing (object) which the sentence-word predicates.

We might illustrate the effect of *did, shall, will, should, would, are,* and *were,* interrogative, in the way we have done with *do*. It would, however, only occupy time and space, with the result of showing that they are not verbs, but are words of the same character as the imperatives and interjective words; *i.e.* not "parts of speech," but "speeches" in one word; words "not entering into the construction of speech," because each is, in itself, a complete assertion.

In poetic language we do what is done, in other languages, in ordinary prose composition, that is, instead of using the auxiliaries *do* and *did,* we invert the position of other verbs and their *seeming* subjects. "Hold you the watch?" is equivalent to "Do you hold the watch?" In the former, *hold* is the sentence-word, as *do* is in the other. It asserts the desire of the speaker for information as to a present holding. The added words simply define the holding as the holding by *you* of *the watch*.

We are not aware that any grammar has ever taken cognizance of the fact that, in the English speech at least, *the subject of a verb* (its dominant) *always goes before it.* Of course this law could not be recognized whilst the noun or pronoun which follows an interrogative was supposed to be a subject; but now that that supposition is disposed of, we think the fact is worth remembering, as well as the other fact that the first word of every question is a sentence-word, and neither a verb nor an interrogative pronoun.

It is not to be assumed because, when speaking of responsive sentence-words, no other examples were referred to besides *yes, yea, ay,* and *no,* that there are none else. If we, for instance, should ask, "Do you manage it so?" the answer might be *thus, so, exactly, precisely,* just as well as *yes.* Or the question, "Do you live in (or, *come from*) London?" might be answered by *there* or *thence.* "Did you say it for that reason?" would be answered by *therefore* as well as by *yes;* and any such single-word reply would be a responsive sentence-word, and no part of speech at all.

Many affirmative responsives become negative by the addition of *not, not thus, not so, not exactly,* etc. Grammars generally speak of *not* as an

adverb; but when, as in such instances, it has no reference to a verb, we should deny, not merely its title to be called adverb, but its claim to rank as a part of speech. We might call it an "add-sentence-word," but would prefer to regard it as a part of the sentence-word.

We can hardly pretend to say that all sentence-words are comprised in the imperatives, the interjectives, the interrogatives, and the responsives. Most sentence-words, however, are of one or other of these four species; and now that we see into the nature and character of sentence-words, there can be no practical difficulty in recognizing them, whether they rank or not in any one of these four species.*

* *Let him, us,* or *them, go* were once reckoned imperative forms of *go*. *Let* is here a word of the same nature as an imperative, that is, it is a sentence-word. It differs from it, however, in that it makes a *proposal* instead of commanding. It might be called a "propositive sentence-word."

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

Our analysis of speech-material demonstrates the fact, hitherto practically ignored, that all words are not "parts of speech," and that innumerable words are habitually ranged, as parts of speech, in categories to which they stand in no functional relation.

As a part of speech, the article has, for many years, been fading away, till now it is practically ignored, except as a quite ordinary adnoun. A growing consciousness, too, has long existed that the distinction between the noun and the pronoun is unmaintainable; and what has been here said will certainly tend to confirm the common impression that, functionally, the noun and the pronoun are identical. A very little looking of the thing in the face is needed to make it manifest that the function of the preposition is precisely that of the conjunction, namely, the conjoining and relating of ideas conveyed by other words; and that the inter-

jections, even when they are words, are not "parts of speech," but whole speeches.

The words which enter, as parts, into the construction of phrases and sentences (the only ones which are really "parts of speech") are functionally divisible into non-attributives and attributives; and the latter again into adnouns, verbs, adverbs, and conjunctions. Parts of speech perform no other function, and the division of words into a larger number than *five* "parts" rests on a confused notion as to the functional character of phrase and sentence building material. No word is a part of speech which is not referable to one or other of these five classes—

1. *Noun:* the independent thing-word; the non-attributive; the namer of the individual as such.

2. *Adnoun:* the noun attendant, and the definer of its individuality.

3. *Verb:* the word that assertatively attributes to the noun an action or a state.

4. *Adverb:* the verb attendant, and definer of the action or state which the verb asserts.

5. *Conjunction:* the relator of ideas conveyed by other words.

In a phrase, as in a sentence, there are usually several words which have the *appearance* of nouns.

In no such case is there, however, more than one real noun; that, namely, which grammarians call the subject or nominative case, and which we call the "dominant."* That alone is the non-attributive word. Those called "objectives," direct or indirect, are attributives, and their nounhood is but *seeming*. Their function is adverbial; and, whilst the direct objectives are pure adverbs, the indirect objectives constitute, with their prepositional attachment, "adverbial expressions."

When treating of the conjunctions, we met with words which, though entering into the construction of phrases and sentences, are not of themselves parts of speech, seeing that, *alone*, they do not perform any function;—we allude to *than*, *nor*, *either*, *neither*, and the comparatives and superlatives of adnouns and adverbs; all which require the co-operation of other words to make them serviceable as functionaries. It was also noted that, in numerous other instances, the conjunctional office is performed, not by a single word, but by several, constituting a "conjunctional expression." Excluding "sentence-words," then, we found it

* The subject or nominative case may be one thing or a plurality of similar or of different things. When speaking of the "real noun," the thing or all the things described or asserted of is to be understood.

impracticable to say even that every other single word is a part of speech, and necessary to admit that adverbial, conjunctional, and adnounal expressions are functionaries of the same kind as single-word parts of speech.

To the word "phrase" we affixed a definite meaning, as a description by several words without assertion; and to the word "sentence" a like meaning, as an assertion by means of several words; and we saw that, whilst nouns, adnouns, and conjunctions only enter into the former, verbs and adverbs also enter into the composition of sentences. Sentences we might have divided into active and passive, according as the verb used were a force-word, predicating activity (positive or negative), or were a *be*-word, predicating state only; and again have divided each of these into hypothetic and unhypothetic assertions. Nothing, however, within the scope of our immediate purpose seemed to require this, and whether, for any practical purpose, such divisions may be expedient or not, we leave to be hereafter considered.

That phrase and sentence building is entirely a process of adnounization, direct or indirect, of the dominant, was acknowledged; and also that sentences, perfect in themselves, and sentence-

words, are adnounized by phrases and by other sentences, in principle, just as they are by the single words called "parts of speech," or by the compound parts of speech which we have called "expressions."

The variation of the noun-form for number was found needful, and unobjectionable when its object is merely to indicate a quite indefinite plurality, but meaningless and tautological when an adnoun of number, definite or indefinite, accompanies the noun. We saw that good sense and consistency require us to say, for instance, *two man, some boy,* just as we say *two hundred,* or *some sheep, deer, or swine.*

We also saw that there is tautology in using, as we do, the article *a* (really the number *one*) to indicate that we speak of a single thing, when the singular form of the noun already indicates it quite adequately.* If we desired to mark the oneness of a thing emphatically, *a* before a singular noun were justifiable, otherwise not. Our constant use of the indefinite article where it was not required has, no doubt, been the cause that we associate with

* "I see sheep, horse," etc., instead of having its natural sense of "I see *one* sheep, *one* horse," etc., has the unnatural one of "I see *some* (several or a piece of) sheep, horse," etc.

the singular noun, unaccompanied by *a*, the alien idea of *someness* instead of the natural one of *singleness;* and so has thrown an obstacle in the way of our giving up the use of *a* or *an* where it serves no real purpose.

The notion of three or four genders, with which grammars complicate speech, we saw to be mere fatuity, and gave credit to English experience and good sense for having largely ignored the troublesome and meaningless fiction which made classic and Anglo-Saxon nouns, and which makes French, Italian, and German nouns, pretend to be of some sex when they are really of none, and to be very often, when sexual, of a sex the opposite of the real one.

It was further observed approvingly that modern English has practically abolished, except as regards some half-dozen nouns called "pronouns," the classic noun-cases, and adopted the better practice of indicating the dominance of a noun-word by placing it invariably *before* the verb, and of indicating the various subordinate relationships in which noun-words are used by prepositions rather than by inflections. We also recognized the fact, which our grammars always obscure, that our "possessive case" is usually a mere adnoun, and

that it is a noun only when it is unaccompanied by the noun it usually attends upon and defines as to ownership. We saw good reason for retaining this relic of the Latin case-inflections, because, unlike the Latin inflections generally, it points out one, and but one, relation between the dominant and the inflected noun-word, and expresses that relationship distinctly and more briefly than could otherwise be done.

Discussing at length the double forms, called "nominative" and "objective," of the six personal and one relative pronoun, we came to the conclusion that the second form is, not merely an inconsistency and a superfluity, but a very great and needless obstruction, involving in its use infinite difficulties, and effecting no practical good. We saw that, as parts of speech, the noun and pronoun are indistinguishable; that the so-called "relative, interrogative, and adjective pronouns" had not the nounal function; whilst a great number of adnoun-words were usable apart from their nouns, and, so used, were real nouns, as standing for the idea of a thing individual and non-attributive.

Taking the function of the conjunction to be that of conjoining and relating the ideas conveyed in other words and in phrases and sentences, we

found that the prepositions, the relative pronoun and its many compounds (commonly *mis*called adverbs), together with a large number of comparative expressions, fall into the conjunctional category; also that the infinitives and both participles are in constant use as conjunctions.

Dealing with the variations of the verb-form for number, person, mood, and tense, our conclusion was that the actual or any variations for number or person are, and cannot be otherwise than, meaningless and mischievous. We saw, too, that there is no ground whatever for considering the infinitives, the imperatives, or the participles as verbs even; *à fortiori* none for speaking of them as "moods." The subjunctive mood seemed to be not quite so gross a fiction as the infinitive, the imperative, and the participial moods; yet, on the whole, it appeared to be rather a grandiose affectation of doing a real thing than a real doing of it—an arrangement so imperfect that it seldom does, and generally cannot do, what it pretends to do. We saw pretty clearly that the purpose of such a mood, is practically realized by the use of the hypothetic conjunctions, and the hypothetic *should, would, could,* and *might;* and that, as an addition to these, the subjunctive-mood forms (where they

exist) are mere superfluity, involving in their use much very nice and very useless art.

The notion that "verbal phrases," compounded of *be* and past participles, constitute a "passive voice" of the verb whence the participle is derived, was shown to be a meaningless fiction. The large number and incongruous variety of imaginary "tenses," recognized as real ones by different grammarians, resolved themselves into a simple present and a simple past. The possibility of many more tenses was demonstrated, whilst the calling by that name of "compound verbal phrases" or "expressions" was denounced as the abuse of a plain word, resulting, as such an abuse always results, in confusion of ideas.

A number of pages were devoted to an investigation of the nature, purport, and peculiarities of the so-called "auxiliary verbs," and not without interesting results. A not unreasonable explanation was arrived at as to how the forms *shall* and *will*, primarily indicating intention, have come to indicate mere futurity (in verbal phrases); and as to why *have*, meaning holding or possessing, should, in such phrases, indicate recentness. We saw that *be* always predicates existence, *i.e.* state, in the most general way; and that *can, may, will, must,*

ought, and a few other verbs, constituting the class which are not force-predicators, predicate state also, but with modifications, that is, less generally. An examination of the words which grammars assume to be past-tense forms of *shall* and *may* proved that *should* and *might* are never tense-forms, but always predicators of hypothetic states or actions; and a like examination of *could* and *would* showed them to be most usually the same thing, though occasionally past-tense forms of *can* and *will*.

Our conclusion with regard to the verb "accidents" in general was that, with the exception of the two tense-forms, all of them are empty and purposeless fictions; and that a verb conjugation, divested of superfluities and delusions, must ignore number, person, voice, and mood, and of no verb recognize more than two variations—those, namely, for the present and the past tenses.

Of the adverbs, recognized as such by grammars, we were compelled to relegate to the conjunctional class all those called "relative" and "connective," and to the class of "sentence-words" those called "interrogative" and the relatives when used interrogatively. All the words qualifying verbs, including infinitives, participles, and nouns in the

objective case, were admitted into our adverbial category, as also were the words said to be adverbs because they "qualify other adverbs." We saw that the words said to be adverbs as qualifying, not verbs, but adjectives, are "adnouns of degree," as the adverb-qualifying-words are "adverbs of degree."

We noted the inconsistency of calling by the name of "adjective" or "adnoun" words used to qualify the states predicated by *be* and its compounds. We could discover no reason why, if words which qualify the *actions* which a force-word predicates are adverbs, words which qualify the states which *be*-words predicate should be called otherwise; and saw that, to call them nouns or adnouns was to let ourselves be imposed on by the mere *form* whilst ignoring the *function*. We saw, indeed, that it was absurd, when we found a word qualifying the predicate of a force-word or a be-word—exercising, in fact, the adverbial function—to call it by any other name than "adverb," because, under different circumstances, the word might exercise the nounal or the adnounal function, or be called "infinitive," "participle," or anything else.

As the result of our investigations, we seem to have arrived at a classification of all words into,

(1) words that, singly, make a complete assertion and are hence called "sentence-words;" and (2) words which, singly, are mere names, and neither assertions nor descriptions (sentences nor phrases), but go to the building up thereof. These last have been shown to have, singly or in combination as "expressions," functional characteristics, whereby they are one and all referable, as functionaries in speech-building, to one or other of the five categories of nouns, adnouns, conjunctions, verbs, and adverbs.

No grammar-book, so far as we know, classifies words in a consistent or clearly intelligible manner. Most, if not all—

1. Fail to make any distinction between words which are, and words which are not, parts of speech.

2. Recognize as different parts of speech articles, pronouns, and prepositions—words which have no function distinguishable from those of the adnoun, the noun, and the conjunction.

3. Recognize as verbs words which, like the infinitives and the participles, never assert; and as pronouns words which, like *who, which, what,* and *that,* which (when they are parts of speech) are essentially conjunctions.

4. Recognize words as nouns and adnouns on account of their *form* merely, disregarding the fact that their *function* is to qualify the predicate of a verb.

5. Recognize as adverbs many words whose function is that of conjoining and relating the ideas conveyed by other words.

6. Set down the possessive noun-forms, which for the most part are pure adnouns, as being invariably nouns, whilst ignoring the fact that these, and adnoun forms in general, are nouns when not accompanied by the noun they qualify.

7. Recognize interjective words, and ejaculations that are not words, imperatives, interrogative and responsive words, and also the comparative and superlative forms of adnouns and adverbs as parts of speech.

Many other scarcely less important instances were incidentally specified, in which present classifications ignore the essential grammatical distinctions of words, and adopt mere plausibilities. The confusion resulting from all this is such that the "art of speech," in so far as grammar deals with and pretends to elucidate it, is a gross delusion—a representation, not of anything resulting from the nature of speech, but a futile attempt to reduce

to some sort of order the infinite discordances which accident and unreasoning imitation of bad precedents have in long ages introduced, not into the English language more than into others, but into all practically alike. That intelligence, applied to speech-material, may ultimately educe an "art of speech" worthy the name, if not, indeed, a Science of speech, there can be no question; and there seems to us no sound reason why grammarians, who devote their minds to the study of languages as they find them, should not go further, and apply their talents and experience to a nobler purpose than that of apologizing for or justifying, and thereby perpetuating, the disorder and inconsistency which pervades speech on all hands; namely, to the getting rid of them, and gradually substituting order and consistency. It scarcely needs to be pointed out that no serious step can be made by grammarians or others in this direction as long as the practice, of which grammarians more than all others are guilty, prevails of using words, and especially technical words, loosely and with no definite signification.

In no subject is the precise and definite use of words more important than when treating of word-constructions, or speech; and, marvellous

as it seems, it is the fact that nowhere are words used so loosely, so indefinitely; nowhere is less care taken to use them always in the same sense. But for this, it had been impossible that the grammatic mind, whilst dealing with parts of speech as its commonest material, should have been in such a state of utter obfuscation as to what a "part of speech" really is, as to have decided that words which cannot assert are verbs, that words are adverbs which influence no verb, that words are nouns whose function is to modify verbs, and that words which are in themselves complete assertions are "parts of speech."

The hostility which the present writer feels towards grammar, as it is, rests on the fact that it aims so low; aims to circumvent, instead of to co-operate with, nature; and that it glorifies and worships, as almost divine, a mere human instrumentality, declining to regard language as man's tool, and preferring to prostrate itself before its mere imperfections rather than presume to apply, as in the case of other tools, observation and judgment to remove them. He cannot patiently look on at the terrible waste of energy and ability involved in maintaining the impossible and self-stultifying definitions and rules of

grammar, and in forcing them upon present and future generations, instead of directing that energy and that ability, as they should be directed, to the very needful adaptation of sounds and sound-symbols to the representation of thought in the tersest and most efficacious ways.

The present task has not been undertaken out of any love of criticism for its own sake, but from a deep conviction on the part of the writer that little suspected, yet unspeakably great profit to society lies in the direction in which he seeks to point attention. Whoever can and will fully and fairly investigate the matter must admit that unspeakable disorder prevails, and that, if not wholly, it is mostly, the result of ill-considered attempts to reconcile the forms of modern English, as an analytic and little-inflected speech, with the much-inflected and comparatively synthetic languages of Greece and Rome. Ere it became a literary speech, the course of English was irrevocably settled, and as all attempts to arrest or divert that course by analogies drawn from the classic tongues have failed hitherto, so they will and must fail in future. It is now full time to desist, and, seeing that English cannot be reconciled to Latin formulæ, to try and make it

consistent with itself, by adopting forms in accord with its own spirit, and by discarding those which are opposed to it.

That a wise Providence has guided and guides the common intelligence of English-speaking men in the right direction as regards their language, if it were otherwise doubtful, is confirmed by the fact that immense efforts to reverse its tendency have invariably failed; have been effectual only to check natural adaptations to new conditions; only to produce the disorder and glaring inconsistency here illustrated. In making these conspicuous, the writer hopes to impress on some leading minds, not too deeply buried in prejudice or too preoccupied with unrelated matters, the folly of continuing to waste priceless energies in withstanding the stream which cannot ultimately be resisted..

The path onward, once fairly and with good will entered on, will prove to be much easier than the retrograde one so long and persistently followed; and obstacles which loom large and darkly in the distance will prove insignificant as they are approached. Already our language is, of all modern ones, the furthest advanced towards self-consistency. Imperfect as it is, it is the perfectest

of existing speech-tools, and for no reason so much as for its defiance of mere precedent. No sudden transformation of it, if it were even desirable, is to be expected; but if the sentimental anxiety to preserve the imaginary embellishments, but real fetters, which hamper our language rather than adorn it, were once well recognized as what it is, and if the removal of those fetters and the substitution of consistent forms were also recognized as a possibility, realizable as it is with a quite moderate endeavour and at no very distant date, delusions would begin noiselessly to die out, dead formulæ to fall away, and living forms to take their places almost without consciousness on our part. In a comparatively short time the English-speaking race would awake to find its language a thing much the reverse of what it is as regards consistency; an instrument of finer and grander power; and, if not the universal language, at least a model of construction such as no existing tongue presents.

NOTE.—It may be as well to note that the attempt alluded to on page 10, as made by the present writer to teach his daughter the orthodox grammar, ended in teaching her, in substance, what is here advocated; and that in the process not the slightest hitch or real difficulty was realized.

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